The SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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ONE MOON AGO.

FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Oh! moon so round and bonnie,
You smile upon me so,
You bring to me a vision,
Of just one moon ago;
Ah! you and I remember
A face then turned on thee;
Creep into his low window,
And tell me what you see.

Fair moon, I fear I'm jealous,
For you may linger where
I'd give a mine of diamonds,
If it would place me there;
Yet moon I love thee dearly,
You smile on both I know,
Although not now together,
As one sweet moon ago.

You clambered o'er the tree tops,
We lingered on the hill;
A sense of blissful living
Our pulses seemed to thrill.
You gave us a fond blessing,
We passed inside the door,
To sit beside the window,
Upon the moonlit floor.

Leaning without the window,
I murmured—lovely scene!
And then a happy silence
Our voices fell between.
He whispered, "What is lovely?"
I answered scarce a word;
Within my heart was prisoned
A tiny warbling bird.

I listened to its music—
E'en now I pause to hear
The echoes of that singing
That comes unto mine ear:
I asked my little birdling
His name, robin or dove?
He gave me then no answer,
But now I know 'tis love.

BEULAH.

A FAMILY-FAILING.

EDITED BY ELIZABETH PRESCOTT,

AUTHOR OF "ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON," "BETWEEN TWO," &C.

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XXVII.

A STRIKING CONVERSATION WITH HIS LORDSHIP.

Lord Carrick was here again to-day. I did not know it, and, going into the morning-parlor, found his lordship stretched upon a lounge.

"You needn't run away," he said. "I haven't come to see you."

"A very good reason why I should run away."

"You are very quick-witted, as well as *footed*. I saw you climbing a gate not long since."

"Did you have on your spectacles?"

"No—and I am glad that I did not."

"I am glad you are here, Eleanor," said Aunt Julia, coming in in her usual hurry. "You can entertain his lordship until I am ready to do so."

"I had rather entertain Cæsar."

"You could more easily do it," said his lordship, quietly.

Aunt Julia had gone out of the room. Perhaps if she had been there I should not have done it. As it was, I walked up to him and gave him a good slap on his face. I struck with a will, for my hand tingled. He did not move, but looked up at me with that one cheek flaming—the rest of his face as cool and fair as marble.

"I could make you pay for that," he said quietly.

"How much?" I asked, attempting to sneer.

"I have a perfect right to take you in my arms and kiss you."

"Why don't you do it?" I asked, preparing myself for a spring through the window, while I trembled with shame and anger.

"Because you are not pretty enough to make me wish to."

"You say that to be disagreeable."

"Not at all. You are not as pretty as you think yourself. You are too thin, and your hair is too light."

"I don't care if *you* think so."

"You do. I am considered to have very correct taste. All women wish me to admire them."

"That might have been—when you were young. The women you used to admire are thinner now than I am. They are skeletons. Why don't you dig them up that you may find something worthy of admiration?"

"Don't be silly."

"I am not silly. It is you who are silly. People who praise themselves are idiots."

"That is all the praise some people can get, however."

"If you mean me you are very much mistaken. I know I am pretty, and you know it too."

"I have never said so."

"I have seen it in your eyes."

"My eyes are liars, then! I have no fancy for 'bread-and-butter misses.'"

"Old Ruth will suit you, then. She is twenty-six."

"Poor, old lady! We shall be grandpa and grandma."

"Are you going to marry her?"

"If she will have me."

"I beg your pardon. I did not know—"

"There is no harm done. I never bear malice."

"At any rate you take her with your eyes open."

"I hope so. I like to look at her."

"*She is thin*," I said triumphantly.

"She doesn't seem so to me."

"Oh! 'Love is blind,'" I said sarcastically.

"I hope so—for your sake."

"You are—almost as disagreeable as Ruth. I think you will be a pair."

"Thank you. She is a very brilliant, charming woman."

"She is like a rattlesnake—she charms by the *rattling of bones*."

Delighted with my wit, I laughed loudly, and sat down opposite his lordship.

"You need not stay," he said. "I am going to read."

"I shan't be in your light—there is not enough of me."

"There is enough of you—to incommode me."

"I am in my own house."

"You mean you are in Mr. Cecil's house."

"I mean what I say."

"And do you say what you mean?"

"Not always—luckily for you."

"Oh! you needn't mind me. I shouldn't mind you."

"I don't ask you to."

"You are getting—stupid."

"Then I must be growing like you."

"Don't grow any more. I don't like maypoles."

"I don't wish to please you."

"Then—*stay*."

"I would like to *kill* you."

"I think I would rather die than have to endure you much longer."

"Why don't you go away?"

"I am not ready to do so?"

"If you are coming here every day, *I* shall go away."

"Please do."

"If it pleases you, I won't."

"I—do—not—care."

"Then say nothing more about it."

He said nothing more, but took up a book. I went to the piano, and began to play.

While I was playing, Mattie and Annette came in.

"I should like to know who you are staying with, Lord Carrick?" said Mattie. "*We* don't see much of you."

"I wish he would stay where he is visiting," said I.

Mattie opened her eyes at me. I suppose she can't understand that a *lord's* society can ever be unacceptable.

"Don't you like to have him here?" broke in Annette. "Mamma said—"

"Annette, you don't know what you are talking about," said Mattie. "You shouldn't repeat everything that is said."

"And I don't believe that Eleanor would like to hear it," acquiesced Annette.

"Is that the reason that you were about to tell me?" I asked.

"I didn't have any reason."

"As usual," I retorted.

"Don't be hard on Annette," said Mattie. "She admires you excessively, and stands up for you upon every occasion."

"Miss Rupell is not feeling very amiable this morning," said Lord Carrick.

"Why don't you go to walk, then? It's a lovely morning."

"I should enjoy a promenade myself, Miss Mattie," said his lordship. "Let us lead the way."

Mattie was *so* delighted. They went on together, and Annette and I followed. I don't care enough for old Carrick to keep away from him, and I was tired of staying in the house.

As soon as I had a chance I asked Annette what her mother had said, and learned that she had expressed it as her opinion that I invited Lord Carrick to spend his mornings at our house.

"Why shouldn't I," was my reply, "when he is to marry my cousin?"

Annette's wonderment was excessive. "What cousin?"

"That is a secret. And you must not tell any one that he is to be married but Mattie. You may tell Mattie."

I don't believe Mattie will enjoy hearing *that* secret.

"Annette, do you know Lord Carrick's Christian name?" I asked, presently.

"Charles. I know, for I have heard Bob call him Charlie."

Mattie and Lord Carrick were some distance ahead of us, but I challenged Annette to a *race*. We passed them, and Cæsar sprang after us, barking at the top of his small voice. Having run until we had lost our breath, we sat down to rest ourselves, and after a while the two others came slowly along, Mattie hanging on his lordship's arm.

"Why don't you sit down, too, Cousin Charles?" I asked.

Mattie opened her eyes very wide. "Are you two relations?" she asked.

"I am only anticipating a little," I replied. "We are to be connected by marriage."

"Are you to marry her cousin, Lord Carrick?" said Mattie, dropping his arm, involuntarily, I suppose.

"So I told her this morning."

"That is the reason she wished you would stay at home, I suppose?" said Mattie.

"Undoubtedly. A man about to be married is as uninteresting as a married man."

"And I would prefer to choose my own relations," was my observation.

"I suppose every man would prefer to select his wife's relations, if he could," said his lordship.

"'Second-hand,'" I remarked.

"They *are* apt to be second-hand," said his lordship.

* * * * * *

A day has passed, and Lord Carrick has not been here!

Bob Temple was over this morning and informed me that he was "deuced glad" that "Carrick is done for." He was afraid that he (Lord Carrick) might "have an eye" in my direction. "What other cousin have you? It isn't Ruth Rupell, for he hasn't seen her for a year or two, to my certain knowledge."

"I am not at liberty to tell," I replied.

"Well, hang it! I don't care who it is, as long as it isn't you. I should have been infernally cut up if it had been you, Nell."

"Don't call me Nell, if you please. And it isn't too late for me to cut out—his present lady-love."

"I don't doubt you could do it; but don't try, for my sake."

"It wouldn't make any difference to you if I should remain single all my life."

"Wouldn't it, though? But you shouldn't do it, if I could help it."

"Don't talk nonsense, Bob, and let go of my hand. I never mean to be married."

"So every girl says. But they don't like to be left old maids for all that."

"I had rather be an old maid than marry you."

"You don't mean that, Nell!"

"I do, too. I hate black hair."

"By Jove! I believe Carrick has disappointed you! That is the reason you are cross and hate black hair all at once."

"Robert Temple, you are a cur. Go away, and never come here again."

"Oh! we are mad! The truth shouldn't be spoken at all times? Because we can't get one set of black curls, we won't look at another that's just as good!"

"Your hair looks like a nigger's."

"And his looks like a barber's dummy's. Good-morning, Miss Rue-the-day."

"Good-bye. Please be Tem-pus fugit."

"Don't '*abuge it*,' then. Nell, don't let us part in anger."

"I am never angry with a person of no importance."

"Aren't you? Well, you will find out my importance some day."

"I shall be too old to see it then."

* * * * * *

When I came down this morning, there was his lordship, *actually here before breakfast!* I opened my eyes at him very wide indeed, and asked him if he had spent the night—here.

"No," he said, coolly. "I walked over over here early to see how you look in a morning-robe."

"I look *thin*, don't I?"

"You look plumper than usual. These full robes, girded in at the waist, are always becoming to slight people."

"*Thin* people, you mean?"

"I mean what I say."

This was the extent of our conversation. I did not speak to him after we sat down to the breakfast table, and when we left it I left the room also.

I put on my hat to walk over to the Temples'. I thought I should like to see how Bob looked after our spat. I stepped very quietly out of the house, for I did not wish his lordship to accompany me. I found Mattie very cross; Annette giggling, as usual. Mattie did not even *pretend* to be glad to see me. Annette was overpowering, also, as usual. "You dear little thing! (I am six inches taller than she is) I was *so* wishing somebody would come."

"And somebody has come."

"How could you leave his lordship?" sneered Mattie.

"His lordship's a bore," was my reply.

"Engaged people *are* bores," said Mattie, languidly.

"Unless they're engaged to one's self. Then they're *dears*," I retorted. Mattie turned up her nose very visibly at this. "What's the matter with Mattie this morning? Poor dear!" I said to Annette.

"I'm well enough," said Mattie, tossing her head.

"I am glad to hear it, but I thought you ap-*peer*-ed as if your usually *lord*-ed spirits had deserted you. Isn't that Bob down there, Annette? Let's go and tease him."

Bob received me very coolly. He *almost* yawned in my face. "I shall be off some of these days," he observed, in the course of conversation.

"Off the hooks?" I inquired.

"I hate slang," he said, savagely.

"Know thyself," said I.

"It's confoundedly stupid, here. Not even a decent-looking girl in the neighborhood to flirt with."

"Here am I, Bob."

"You! You're an old story."

"Published Anno Domini, 1849. Ruth Rupell is coming to see Aunt Julia, pretty soon. Stay, and she will flirt with you, to your heart's content."

"I agree with you. I don't like black hair—even to flirt with."

"I had just as soon *flirt* with black hair. It's the *marrying* it, I object to."

"You had salad for breakfast, didn't you?"

"Do I look very green?"

"You seem rather vinegary."

"That's because Lord Carrick breakfasted with us. If he only had red hair, what fun it would be to call him Carrots."

"The idea of getting any fun out of *him!*"

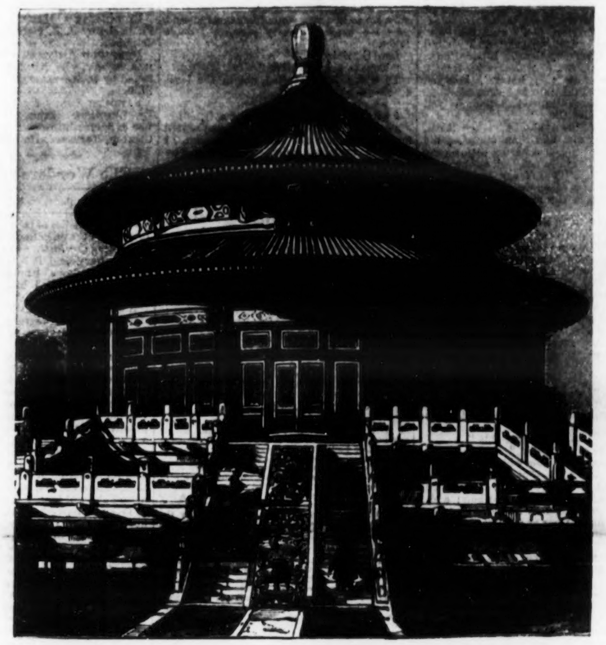
"You don't know how to go to work to do it."

"I don't wish to. It's confoundedly mean to make fun of any one."

"But some people make themselves ridiculous."

"*I* shan't. You won't find *me* fair game."

"Not with that dark complexion. At present, you seem more like a black wolf,



TEMPLE OF THE SUN, PEKING, CHINA, (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

Temples in China are equivalent to mosques in Mohammedan countries, or churches in Christendom. When a Chinaman is asked by a foreigner the name of these edifices, he calls them Joss-houses, and the idols upon their altars are named Joss. This title has risen through a corruption of the Portuguese word *Deos*, signifying God, which the Chinese have indiscriminately applied to all their images, mythological or historical, as it was the first foreign name for the Deity introduced by the Jesuits upwards of three centuries ago. Strictly speaking, therefore, a joss-house, in the Chinese, means the house of God, or place of worship. But, as these temples are dedicated to various kinds of worship, they are designated in the Chinese language according to their special consecration. For example, a temple for the worship of ancestors is named *meaou*, and a temple of Buddha *paou fang;* while the latter description of temples are again divided into six different kinds. Besides temples of a religious character, there are many dedicated to the memory of great men and women; as that at Peking to the wife of the Emperor Houang-te, "the discoverer of the silkworm." But these come more under the head of monuments; and the subject may be extended *ad infinitum* where these buildings are numbered by thousands and tens of thousands. The temple represented above is dedicated to the sun, as the great source of heat and light, and is under the protection of the God, or rather Genius of Fire, who ranks first among the symbolical deities of the elements; the others being the Genii of Wood, Earth, Metal, Air, and Water, according to Chinese mythology. In the interior is a colossal image of this myth, the face having a more pleasing expression than the usual hideous idols to be found in these temples. It is made of metal gilded, and is seated on a throne, with the following inscription in Chinese characters:—"Ting-me sin-shun-wye;" signifying the "Spiritual Throne of the Genius of Fire." At the feet of this image is an altar, with a large iron censer of a tripod form—the same as the one seen in the foreground of the woodcut—containing sand, in which are continually smouldering long sandal-wood matches, which emit a pleasant scented smoke. Below this is the usual kneeling-stool covered with carpet, where the votaries of this deity bow down and supplicate his protection in any matter relating to light or fire. At the side are attendant priests, who invoke the good offices of the fiery genius in the cause of the suppliant, who pays them so much for a bundle of sandal-wood matches, to stick into the sand of the censer, and light them up, sometimes fifty at a time, according as they suppose it will propitiate his idolship; but this in all cases is in proportion to the liberal payment of the devotees.

than anything else. And, as there isn't any price set on wolves' heads, in our days, I shan't hunt you."

"Thank you. I feel safe now," said he, with an enraged bow. Wrath always makes some people so polite.

"What's the use of a safe, with no money to put in it?"

This last remark exhausted Bob's patience, and he left us, abruptly.

I stayed at the Temples' to luncheon. Lord Carrick did not make his appearance. So I knew that he had remained to lunch with Aunt Julia. Annette and I went to drive in the pony-carriage, after dinner, from which meal Lord Carrick was also absent. I did not go home until evening; and, when I went into the drawing-room, there was his lordship, reading aloud to Aunt Julia!

Which a brief "good-night," I lighted my candle, and marched off to bed.

XXVIII.

ELEANOR IS SURPRISED.

"His lordship isn't here to breakfast again?" I said to Aunt Julia, this morning, stopping her on the threshold of the breakfast-room door, after a hurried glance into the room.

"He is staying with me," said Aunt Julia. "I thought it would be pleasanter for Ruth, as you say you shall go when she comes."

"If I recollect Ruth's peculiarities, it will be pleasanter for her, anyway, to have a man in the house. I have told the Temples that I wish to stay with them while Ruth is here; and they are not surprised. I think I shall pack up my things and go to-day."

"As you please."

"Don't let the creature have my own pretty room. I should have to fumigate it when she is gone. Good morning, Lord Carrick. You and I change places."

"Have I your place?" said his lordship, who was already seated at the table reading the Times.

"You have my place in this house, and I am about to take your place at the Temples'. I wonder if I can fill it. Aunt Julia, do you think me an adept in graceful impertinence and high-bred nonchalance?"

"I don't think you will have to take lessons in impertinence."

"You must try to live without me, while Ruth is here."

"We shall endeavor to do so," observed his lordship.

"I mean Aunt Julia. I don't suppose I am indispensable to your vitality, my lord."

"By no means."

"Fortunately I should be disposed to withdraw myself altogether, were it otherwise."

"How it might affect Mr. Bob Temple—"

"Mr. Bob Temple is not on speaking terms with me."

His lordship raised his handsome eyebrows.

"I am hoping to render my stay at his house very disagreeable to him."

"Is there any one whom you would wish to make happy?" inquired his lordship.

"Yes, one—if he were alive—my Cousin Rupert."

"Unfortunately, one can do nothing for the dead, unless—"

"Unless—?"

"One believes in purgatory."

After I had done my packing, I went into the drawing-room to get my hat and gloves, and stopped a minute before a picture of Ruth, that hung there. The thin, dark face and glittering eyes seemed to start from the frame as I gazed, and pursue me with a triumphant glance as I turned away. It seemed as if the bosom heaved, and stirred the one or two long, shining curls which depended over one shoulder, with the yellow threads running through their glossy blackness, as I so well remembered them. I was glad when I reached the Temples—for it seemed as if Ruth's presence already infected my home, and rendered it hateful to me. It is strange how very disagreeable Bob Temple has become. I was half-inclined to treat him well—but now, the hatchet has been flourished in so decided a manner, that it will be impossible to bury it.

* * * * *

I have been here three days, and have not been home once—because Lord Carrick is there. His lordship has been here but once. I disappeared when I learned he was in the house. I didn't want him to make any of his remarks before Mrs. Temple.

Mattie isn't nice a bit. I feel constantly inclined to smash her. Annette is amiable, but *what a fool!* I wish—I wish that I hadn't fought with Bob. What's the use in making oneself look pretty, when there's no one to see one?—and Bob keeps out of the house all day, is late at every meal, and off every evening.

* * * * *

I had on such a lovely dress to-day, that I thought it a shame no man should see it; and when Lord Carrick called, I actually went into the drawing-room. He did not say much to me during the call; but when he got up to go, he asked me if I didn't want to walk back with him, it was such a lovely evening. I said I would, "by way of variety," and, putting on my wraps, slid my hand under his lordship's arm, and we went out into the golden atmosphere, and under a sky like clouded emerald. We had not gone very far before the moon came sailing up the sky, although the sun had not yet set, and there her face shone, white and pale, opposed to the clouds of pink and blue and softest violet, which trooped after the declining sun.

"The King is dead—long live the Queen!" I said, looking up at her majesty's pallid, full-orbed countenance.

"The full moon affects you?" said his lordship.

"Do you think me affected?"

"Not in that sense. You are brusque, at least, so you seem to me, who admire softness of manner in a woman."

"Like Ruth's."

"Yes, like Ruth's."

"You think her perfection, I suppose?"

"I always said I should think her perfect if she were large, fair, and red-haired."

"As is the fashion, at present. That is just what Cecil used to say."

"Your cousin?"

"The handsomest and hatefullest of my cousins."

"When did you see him last?"

"About seven years ago."

"He may have grown agreeable since then."

"Impossible. You make me think more of him, than any one else in the world."

"How delightful is frankness! Well, I forgive the 'hateful' for the 'handsome.'"

"Oh! you don't look like him—much."

"I thought I was going to quite enjoy this walk with you, but you will insist upon being—natural."

"Wait until Ruth comes, and you won't have to contend with Nature."

"Not with Art, certainly. No one paints *brown.*"

"Oh! she lets you see her natural face—but she has two selves."

"How women hate each other!"

"Because they know each other so well. Very few women can deceive their own sex."

"You are nothing but a child. You only know other children."

"I did not expect to convince you."

"Your expectations are fulfilled."

His lordship and I did not exchange another word during our walk; and when we reached the house I sprang on before him, and rushed into the drawing-room, from the windows of which streamed a brilliant light, to give Aunt Julia one of my favorite "squeezes." With her back to the door, sat a lady, with a perfect torrent of red-brown hair flowing over her shoulders. My tumultuous entrance seemed to startle her, for she turned her head, and then rose. Miss Cray! by the superb breadth of the shoulders, the rich coloring, the bright, abundant hair! But the eyes were dark and piercing, and as she looked at me, they seemed to grow lighter, until they glowed yellow as topaz. I drew back just as Lord Carrick came in—and, as he came forward, I, who had been still retreating, laid my hand upon his arm, and clung to it, hateful as the support would otherwise have been.

"She don't know me," said the lady, smiling, and advancing, "but I should have known her anywhere. Little Persephone!"

The voice—the old, hateful, honeyed voice—I knew that well, and said,

"You are Ruth Rupell! I thought you the ghost of Miss Cray."

"Do I look like a ghost?" asked Ruth, softly, kissing me, and then studying my face, with her handsome head a little on one side. "Miss Cray did not look as she used, before she died. The fever had burned off her hair, and consumed her flesh—that fever she caught the night of the masquerade."

Lord Carrick went to the window, as if to leave us to ourselves. The old repulsion was working in my veins. My hands grew hot in those white, dimpled ones belonging to the large, round arms, the voluptuously-rounded figure, the full, statue-like throat, the dimpled, blooming face from which Ruth's yellow eyes looked out, and through whose scarlet lips Ruth's dreaded voice cooed in soft accents.

"You have grown fat, and have had your hair dyed," was the spoken result of my observations.

"How like the old Persephone!" said Ruth. "You always said just what you meant."

"And you were very opposite in that respect."

"I always tried to be agreeable."

"And always succeeded," said Lord Carrick, coming from the window. Then I thought, with a start, that he had said that Ruth would be perfection were she but large and fair, and had she red hair; and I looked at him to see how he looked at her. He did not look at her at all, but straight at me, as he asked—"Isn't this a pleasant surprise?"

"Oh! that is why you asked me to walk home with you?"

"Yes."

"I owe you thanks for it."

"You shall pay me some time, but not now. Ruth, hasn't she changed?"

"Only in height and contour—the face is the same."

"And the spirit."

"Yes, and the spirit," said Ruth, with one of her old glances.

Aunt Julia came in at this instant, and I ran to embrace her.

"You came to see Ruth?" said she.

"I did not know that Ruth was here."

"Should you have known her?"

"I should have known her eyes, anywhere."

Her eyes were no longer yellow, but dark and soft as she raised them to Lord Carrick, who was hanging over her now, with neither eyes nor ears for any one else. He asked her to sing. She went to the piano, and—how she did sing! This is her song. I got a copy of the words."

Oh, sky! let soft showers seek the shrinking earth!
To-night a scarlet flower of passion and of pain
Has blossomed, and its petals call for rain;
Not all my tears can quench its vivid flame,
T'will go but as it came.

Oh, night! let your soft shadows veil the shrinking earth!
Fly, timid creature, rustling through the wood—
Hide, trembling violet, neath your purple hood,
Shrink from this mystery without a name,
T'will go but as it came.

Oh, earth, to your dark breast my secret take!
Cover it close with tangled vine and brake,
For it a mound of velvet mosses make,
And garland it with flowers that glow and flame,
T'will go but as it came.

Oh, Nature! do you sculpture out your dead?
The golden-rod hangs tresses at his head,
Here, where his mouth is, cluster berries red—
And laughing violets open like blue eyes;
And on his breast the purple heartsease lies;
The very birds do chirp and trill the name
Of that which went but as it came.

"Are all your songs as melancholy as that?" asked his lordship.

"I have them to suit all moods and tenses," said Ruth, running her fingers over the piano.

Stand up, tall tulip, your cup's brimming over,
Shut your hearts, roses, that bee is a rover—
White, sweet narcissus, are dew-drops your glass?
Pale, little violet, pray let me pass,
Down in the meadow, half crazy with glee,
Chirping, and singing, and calling to me—
The birds are all twittering—come here and see.

Tulip, that's freckled with crimson and gold,
Let me drink all the nectar your chalice can hold;
Roses, just tint my pale cheek with your red—
Pansy, your purple hood slip o'er my head,
Down in the meadow I must go, and see
Why all the birds are so crazy with glee,
Why they are singing, and calling to me.

Buttercups, streaming your gold in my path,
Few are the coins that a poor poet hath.
Butterfly, rifling the sweets of the vine,
Little of life's sordid cares you divine;
Birds, blithely singing in hedgerow and tree,
Why are you chirping, and calling to me—
No mate in your gladness, no heart for your glee.

Poor? There is gold for your gathering, here.
Weary? Here's rest on a heart that is dear.
Sad? Here are eyes that will weep for your woe,
Light feet will follow wherever you go.
Birds, blithely singing in hedgerow and tree,
Chirping, and twittering, and calling to me—
I'm a mate in your gladness, I've heart for your glee.

Why was it that, when Ruth sang, I felt the old glamour stealing over me—the same that had bewitched me in the organ-room at Thornbaugh? She knew it—for she gave me one of her sidelong glances, and then came up to me, and wound her arms around me. We made a pretty picture, I don't doubt.

Lord Carrick said—

"That is very effective."

To which Ruth replied, not in the least abashed—

"I know it."

I withdrew myself from those soft, clinging arms, with a jerk, and went and seated myself at the other end of the room. I saw his lordship smile. The old fellow knows that I hate her.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, DEC'R 25, 1869.

TERMS.

The terms of THE POST are the same as those of that beautiful magazine, THE LADY'S FRIEND—in order that the clubs may be made up of the paper and magazine conjointly when so desired—and are as follows:—One copy (and a large Premium steel Engraving) **$2.50; Two copies $4.00; Four copies $6.00; Five copies (and one extra) $8.00;** Eight copies (and one gratis) **$12.00.** One copy of THE POST and one of THE LADY'S FRIEND, **$4.00.** Every person getting up a club will receive the Premium Engraving in addition.

Subscribers in the British Provinces must remit twenty cents extra for postage. Papers in a club will be sent to different post-offices if desired. Single numbers sent on receipt of six cents. Contents of Post and of Lady's Friend always entirely different.

Subscribers, in order to save themselves from loss, should, if possible, procure a Post-office order on Philadelphia; or get a draft on Philadelphia or New York, *payable to our order.* If a draft cannot be had, send a check payable to our order on a National Bank; if even this is not procurable, send United States notes. Do not send money by the Express Companies unless you pay their charges. Always be sure to name your Post-office, County, and State.

SEWING MACHINE Premium. For 30 subscribers at $2.50 apiece—or for 20 subscribers and $60—we will send Grover & Baker's No. 23 Machine, price $55. By remitting the difference of price in cash, any higher priced Machine will be sent. Every subscriber in a Premium List, inasmuch as he pays $2.50, will get the Premium Steel Engraving. The lists may be made up conjointly, if desired, of THE POST and the LADY'S FRIEND.

Samples of THE POST will be sent for 5 cents—of the Lady's Friend for 10 cents.

Address
HENRY PETERSON & CO.,
319 Walnut St., Philadelphia.

NOTICE.—Correspondents should always keep copies of any manuscripts they may send to us, in order to avoid the possibility of loss, as we cannot be responsible for the safe keeping or return of any manuscript.

RENEW IN TIME!

Our subscribers whose terms expire at the end of the year, would oblige us very much by renewing their subscriptions as early as possible. They would thus prevent the delay in forwarding their papers, which is apt to occur at the beginning of the new year, owing to the large amount of work which is thrown at that time upon our clerks. It would also have a tendency to prevent those mistakes which often result from a great pressure of business.

STACKS! STACKS!!

New subscribers need not fear that our large extra edition of the numbers of THE POST from October 2d is beginning to be exhausted. We have yet stacks on hand. Therefore send on your names without fear. We expect this time to be able to supply all new comers.

Will our regular subscribers please call the attention of their friends and acquaintances to THE POST, and its liberal inducements. By so doing they will confer a great favor upon us.

Compare the terms of THE POST with those of other first-class weeklies—and mark the contrast!

☞ A letter now before us from a lady in Hillsdale, Michigan, says:—

> "This makes twenty years that I have taken your paper, and when I fail to renew my subscription you may expect that I am dead, as I am a subscriber for life. I would have sent a larger club, but I am aged and infirm. *But I must have* THE POST."

Our business letters frequently contain passages like the above; and the writers must not think we fail to see them, or to respond to them in our heart, because we generally make no public reference to them. They are exceedingly grateful to us.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.—The number for January, 1870, is a truly splendid New Year's gift. A thrilling picture—"IN THE RAPIDS" of Niagara, is the first steel plate. The second is a beautiful title-page for the magazine, encircled with the flower-wreathed portraits of seven of its lady contributors—the brightly intellectual face of Mrs. Henry Wood matronizing the younger ladies—Mrs. Moulton, Florence Percy, Elizabeth Prescott, Miss Douglas, August Bell, and Mrs. Hosmer. Every admirer of these talented ladies will desire to see this beautiful plate. The Colored Fashion Plate, as usual, shows the latest styles; and there is besides a page of richly colored patterns for Berlin Work. The music is the "ROCKAWAY SCHOTTISCH." A great variety of articles for ladies' dress, and for the work-table, are illustrated by wood cuts. A beautiful and powerful story by Mrs. Moulton—"DID HE FORGET HER?" is begun in this number; and there is a poem by Florence Percy, and stories by E. B. Ripley, Miss Douglas, A. M. Dana, &c. The publishers offer great inducements to new subscribers, and we recommend our readers to inclose ten cents for a sample copy, to Deacon & Peterson, 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia. Price $2.50 a year (which also includes a large steel engraving.) Four copies, $6. Five copies (and one gratis), $8. "The Lady's Friend" and "The Saturday Evening Post" (and *one* engraving), $4.00.

MARCUS WARLAND; OR, THE LONG MOSS SPRING. By Mrs. CAROLINE LEE HENTZ, author of "Linda," &c. Published by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philada.

The "B. O. W. C." A Book for Boys. By the author of "The Dodge Club," &c. Illustrated. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

APPLETON'S JOURNAL. Monthly Part. No. 9. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by D. Ashmead, Philada.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE, for January. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.

DUFFIELD ASHMEAD'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS STORY. By NELLIE EYSTER. Published by D. Ashmead, 724 Chestnut street, Philada.

SABBATH SONGS for Children's Worship. By LEONARD MARSHALL. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

The Wonders of the Sun.

A startling paragraph is going the rounds of the newspapers about the present highly-excited condition of the sun's atmosphere. It declares that a column of magnetic light is shooting out farther and farther from the solar sphere, and it is now stretching out forty-five millions of miles. In other words, it has accomplished half the distance between us and the sun.

A Michigan editor, who has encountered this formidable paragraph, desires, with not unreasonable anxiety, to know "how long it will be before this mighty magnetic column finishes the rest of the distance, and bridges the gigantic chasm between the earth and the sun? Is it a messenger sent out to snatch us up as food for the insatiate monster that keeps himself warm by devouring planets, and whose fire-eating propensities this whole earth would satisfy for a few days only? If so, how long will this emissary be in reaching us, and carrying the globe away as if we were a gigantic lump of coal for a roaring furnace? It is predicted that, before the end of next year, this magnetic light will have got near enough to us to make its immediate and actual influence upon the earth distinctly felt. It is announced that in consequence we may expect to see phenomena that have never been seen or known before by the human race. "If any of our readers are, therefore, yet disposed to complain of the weather and the earthquake, let them remember that, by this time next year, they may have an entire new line of experiences to explain and endure, in comparison with which the fitful winter and rough, rude autumn of to-day may seem like a June morning in Paradise, and the earthquake's shock and lightning's storm a placid rocking in the cradle with a pleasant lullaby of thunder."

In his perplexity, the Michigan editor naturally resorts to the Journal for a solution of this great question, and, sending us his own remarks, desires to know what we think of the matter.

Our opinion is, that there is nothing to be alarmed at in the present manifestations of excited action in the sun's atmosphere. Similar phenomena have doubtless occurred thousands of times before, the only difference being that we now possess means of observing them which were unknown to the astronomers of past ages. We condense, from a recent number of the London Spectator, the following account of these solar wonders, from which we infer that the newspaper statement above referred to is merely an exaggeration of the truth, and that the magnetic column which it mentions should be measured by thousands and not by millions of miles. The Spectator says:—

"Astronomers have been revealing so many wonders in the vast globe which rules the planetary scheme, that we cannot yet hope to see the startling results of their researches coordinated into a consistent whole. On every hand new marvels are being brought to light. At one time, Mr. Lockyer surprises us by exhibiting the amazing velocities with which the solar storms rage across the blazing surface of our luminary. At another, the energetic astronomer who presides over the Roman Observatory tells us of water within the fierce tumult of the solar spots. The Kew observers track the strange influences of the planets on the solar atmosphere, watching, not only the great tide of spots which sweeps in the ten-year period over the solar storm-zones, and then leaves our sun clear from speck or stain, but also the ripples of spotformation which come in shorter periods, and seem inextricably blended, to ordinary observers, with the great periodic disturbances. Lastly, Lockyer, Huggins, Zollner, and Secchi, describe the magic changes of form which pass over tongues of flame, projecting thousands of miles from the solar surface.

"We have before us, as we write, a series of colored prominence pictures, taken by Dr. Zollner, the eminent photometrician. It is impossible to contemplate these strange figures without a sense of the magnificence of the problem which the sun presents to astronomers. Here are vast entities—flames, if we will, but flames unlike all those with which we are familiar. And these vast tongues of fire assume forms which speak to us at once of the action of forces of the utmost violence and intensity. The very aspect of these objects at once teaches this; but it is the rapid changes of place and of figure to which the spots are subjected that are most significant on this point. Here is a vast cone-shaped flame, with a mushroom-shaped head of enormous proportions, the whole object standing sixteen or seventeen thousand miles from the sun's surface. In the cone figure we see the uprush of lately-imprisoned gases, in the outspreading head the sudden diminution of pressure as these gases reach the rarer upper atmosphere. But turn from this object to a series of six pictures placed beside it, and we see the solar forces in action. First, there is a vast flame, some eighteen thousand miles high, bowed toward the right, as though some fierce wind were blowing upon it. It extends in this direction some four or five thousand miles. The next picture represents the same object ten minutes later. The figure of the prominence has wholly changed. It is now a globe-shaped mass, standing on a narrow stalk of light above a row of flame-hillocks. It is bowed toward the left, so that in these short minutes the whole mass of the flame has swept thousands of miles away from its former position. Only two minutes later, and again a complete change of appearance. The stalk and the flame-hillocks have vanished, and the globe-shaped mass has become elongated. Three minutes later, the shape of the prominence has altered so completely that one can hardly recognize it for the same. The stalk is again visible; but the upper mass is bowed down on the right, so that the whole figure resembles a gigantic A, without the cross-bar, and with the down-stroke abnormally thick. This great A is some twenty thousand miles in height, and the whole mass of our earth might be bowled between its legs without touching them! Four minutes pass, and again the figure has changed. The flame-hillocks reappear, the down-stroke of the A begins to raise itself from the sun's surface. Lastly, after yet another interval of four minutes, the figure of the prominence has lost all resemblance to an A, and may now be likened to a camel's head looking toward the right. The whole series of changes has occupied but twenty-three minutes; yet the flame exceeded our earth in volume tenfold at the least. But Mr. Lockyer has recorded an instance of a yet more marvellous nature. A vast prominence, extending seventy or eighty thousand miles from the sun's surface vanished altogether in ten minutes.

"It seems to us that, when we consider the real dimensions of the solar globe, we appreciate more fully the wonderful nature of those processes of action indicated by recent researches, than when we regard these without direct reference to the sun's magnitude. How many of us really appreciate the enormous volume of the sun? We read certain figures in books of astronomy; but do we grasp their full significance? There is, however, a simple way of viewing the matter, which at once opens our eyes to the vastness of the solar globe. If we remember that the earth on which we move, the scene of all those interests which we deem so important, bears so minute a proportion to the sun, that, if he were represented by a two-feet globe, the earth would, on the same scale, appear no larger than a cherry-stone, we see what wonderful processes of action those must be which are at work upon the solar surface. We recognize in our hurricanes the action of Nature in her fiercest moods, but the solar hurricanes would in an instant destroy the whole globe on which we live. We wonder at the volcano which lays a whole city in ashes, but our earth would be swept away like a mote before the rush of a solar volcano. We see, lastly, in the earthquake which upheaves a continent, the most energetic of all the forces at work upon our earth, but the least of the throes which convulse the solar surface would toss a globe like ours as the waves of ocean toss the lightest sea-drift.—*Appleton's Journal.*

George Peabody.

He always retained and gloried in the simplicity of his New England training, which is shown by the fact that never till his last visit to Sulphur Springs, when he felt that his days were numbered and almost finished, could he be prevailed upon to have a servant devoted exclusively to personal attendance upon him. A gentleman, the head master of one of his schools, who visited him in Georgetown, said as he stood on the platform of the station, "I wonder if my luggage is all right?" "Just look for yourself," replied Mr. Peabody, "and then you will know." That was his own habit, and without a doubt the chief secret of his success. He always looked for himself, and then he knew.

☞ One hundred and seven counties in Texas give a majority of 1,128 for Davis, Radical. The counties to hear from have a white majority of 2,000, and the official count may be necessary to decide. The Conservatives claim a majority of the Legislature.

☞ Florida and South Carolina offer many attractions to persons in delicate health. Magnolia, in East Florida, is a most desirable spot for a winter residence, with dry, pure air and fragrant fruits and flowers. So also is Aiken, in South Carolina, where the climate, from November to March, is likened to a long Indian summer.

☞ One of the most efficient operators on a sewing machine connected with a large manufacturing firm in New York, is a girl totally blind from birth.

☞ Dr. Gregory, in the course of one of his medical lectures at Edinburgh, said:—"One cannot stand perfectly motionless for half an hour; that he had once tried to do so, and had fainted at the end of twenty minutes, the blood requiring the aid of motion from the body in order to retain its full circulating power."

☞ Adelina Patti Caux is said to be accumulating at the rate of about $100,000 per annum. Twenty-five per cent. of her earnings is settled upon herself. The balance goes into a common fund for herself and husband. At her marriage $200 000 of her previous gains were so settled upon her that even she cannot disturb the principal. The Marquis, her husband, though a man of fashion merely, has, so far, belied the expectations of many, and been not only a very devoted spouse, but an indefatigable surveillant of all her business matters. It is said he is very anxious for her to amass a large fortune speedily, that they may retire and be lazy and luxurious. No class in the world probably, is so overpaid as the fashionable singers.

☞ Every scribbler is fond of quoting "The pen is mightier than the sword," but the quoter sometimes designedly forgets the beginning of the line. "Beneath the rule of men entirely great, the pen is," &c.

☞ An old man, named Fisher, at Patoka, Indiana, told his wife he was going into the cellar to commit suicide. She heard his pistol, and kept on knitting. In about an hour Fisher came up, thinking they didn't miss him at home.

☞ The Buffalo Express lately contained the following: "Ac80-Oar80!!" The next day it explained it thus: "It's easy—A c-eighty (cat) c-aught (caught a r-eighty (rat)—A cat caught a rat! Ain't it?"

Joseph Golding's Last Christmas.

[We find the following in one of the late English magazines. It is so excellent that we republish it in THE POST. It is by Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, and was written by her several years ago. It seems it is still going about, at home and abroad, doing good:]

It was very strange, thought old Joseph Golding, that he couldn't be master of his own mind. He had lived a great many years, and neither remorse nor memory had ever been in the habit of disturbing him; but now it seemed to him as if the very foundations of his life were breaking up. He was well through with his day's work—he had dined comfortably—he sat in an easy chair in a luxurious drawing-room, whose crimson hangings shut out the still cold of the December afternoon—he had nothing to do but enjoy himself. Mr. Golding liked to enjoy himself at this season as much as others did, for it was Christmas Eve. What though he was in the habit of spending it solitarily?—he liked solitude. Perhaps because nothing more lively came in his way, and he was too shy and proud to look out for it.

For many a year on Christmas Eve he had sat balancing in his mind the great accounts presented in his ledgers, the accumulating coffers at his banker's, the strokes of business he would make in future. Not so now. The year was drawing to a close: some intruding voice kept whispering that in like manner so was his career. He could not put it from him, try as he would. The voice reminded him of a coming time when his life's work would be all done—even as his day's work was all done now—when he would be ready to sit down in the evening and look over the balance-sheet of his deeds, good and evil. Curiously the old days came trooping in slow procession before him. And he had been able to forget them for so very long!

His dead wife. He had not loved her much when she was with him, but how vivid was his memory of her now! He could see her moving round the house, noiseless as a shadow, never intruding on him after he had once or twice repulsed her gruffly, but going on her own meek, still ways, with her face growing whiter every day. He began to understand, as he looked back, why her strength had failed; and she had been ready, when her baby came, to float out on the tide and let it drift her into God's haven. She had had enough to eat and drink, but he saw now that he had left her heart to starve. Heaven! what a hard man he had been! He seemed to see her white, still face, as he looked at it the last time before they screwed down the coffin lid, with the dumb reproach frozen on it; the eyes that would never plead vainly any more, closed for ever.

He recalled how passionately the three-day-old baby had cried in another room just at that moment, moving all the people gathered together for the funeral with a thrill of pity for the poor little motherless morsel. She *was* a passionate, willful baby, all through her babyhood; he remembered that. She wanted—missed without knowing what the lack was—the love and sustenance which her mother would have given her, and protested against fate with all the might of her infant lungs. But as soon as she grew old enough to understand how useless it was, *she* had grown quiet, too; just like her mother. He recalled her, all through her girlhood, a shy, still girl, always obedient and submissive, but never drawing very near him. Why? Because he would have repulsed her as he repulsed her mother. He could see it now. It was very strange these facts should come back to him to-day, and their naked truth with them. He had been a cold, hard, ungenial man, without sympathy for any one human being; absorbed utterly in the pursuit of money-making. And so the child, Amy, had grown up in shadow without him.

But suddenly, when she was eighteen, the old, passionate spirit that had made her cry so when a baby must have awakened again, he thought; for she fell in love then, and wished to marry. To marry in defiance of his wishes. He remembered her standing proudly before him after one of their quarrels, where he had been harsh and bitter, and abusive of the man she wanted to call husband. She had borne in silence reproach of herself; but not of him who had become to her as her best existence. Her words came back to the old man now.

"Father, do you know anything against Harry Church?"

"Yes," he had answered, wrathfully; "I know that he is as poor as Job was when he sat among the ashes. He cannot keep a wife as a daughter of mine must be kept."

"Anything else, father?" looking him steadily in the eye.

"No, that's enough," he had thundered. "I'll tell you, besides, that if you marry him you must lie in the bed you will make. My doors will never open to you again, never."

He met with a will as strong as his own, that time. She *did* marry him, and went away with him from her father's house. Mr. Golding had known the day the wedding was to take place, and disdained to stop it. He washed his hands of Harry Church, and of Amy, his wife. She wrote home afterwards over and over again, but Mr. Golding sent all the letters back unopened. Subsequent to that, they disappeared from the town; and he had never heard what became of them. It was at least ten years ago now.

It seemed very strange that these things should have come back to-night to haunt him—and with a wild remorse, a pitying regret. He had done nothing to recall them. Could it be his sense of failing health that brought them?—if so, what sort of anguish might he not look for as he drew nearer and nearer to the ending? He began to wish that he knew what had been in those rejected letters—whether Amy had been suffering for anything that money could supply. The next thought that struck him was, why he had opposed the marriage so virulently. It is true Harry Church had been but a clerk in his own employ; but he was a well-educated gentleman, and would rise with time. Faithful, intelligent, persevering, respected—but poor. In that last word lay the head and front of Harry Church's offending. He, Joseph Golding, was rich then: he was far richer now; but, he could not help asking it, what special good were his riches bringing him? He was an old man, the span of life running quickly on, and he was all alone. Who would take his gold then? He could not carry it along with him. All in a moment—he saw it clearly—the dreadful truth stood naked and bare: his life and its object had been mistaken ones.

"All alone! all alone!" he kept saying to himself, in a sort of vague self-pity. "I've toiled and worked for nought!"

But during this time, even now, as he sat there, a message of love was on its way to him. Perhaps heaven had but been preparing his heart to receive it!

He heard a ring at the door-bell. Heard it without paying attention to it. Rings were nothing to him; people did not come on business to his residence, and of visitors he expected none. Down went his head lower and lower with its weight of thought.

Meanwhile two people were admitted into the hall below: a man and a little girl. The man had the appearance of a staid, respectable servant. He took off the child's warm cloak and hood, and she stood revealed: a dainty, delicate creature of some eight years old; her golden curls drooping softly round her face, with its large blue eyes and its cherry lips. The admitting maid, not knowing what to make of this, called Mr. Golding's housekeeper, old Mrs. Osgood. The latter went into a tremor as she came forward and looked at the face.

"It's Miss Amy's child!" she exclaimed to the man, nervously. "I couldn't mistake the likeness."

"Miss Amy's that was," he answered. "Mrs Harry Church she has been this many a year."

"I know. It is as much as my place is worth to admit any child of her's here."

"You are Mrs. Osgood," exclaimed the little girl. "Mamma said I should be sure to see you."

"Hear the blessed lamb! And so she remembers me."

"She talks of you often: she says you were always kind to her: nobody but you loved her."

"Well, I *did* love her. The old house has never been the same since she went out of it. What's your name, my pretty one?"

"Amy."

"Amy!" repeated the housekeeper, lifting her hands, as if there were some wonder in it.

"And mamma said you would let me go up alone to grandpa."

"And so you *shall*," decided Mrs. Osgood, after a minute's hesitation. "I won't stand in the way of it, let master be as angry with me as he will. He is up in the drawing-room, all by himself."

The man sat down to wait. And the child went up alone.

Opening the door, she went softly in, not speaking; perhaps the stern-looking old man, sitting there with bent head, awed her to silence. Joseph Golding, waking up from his deep reverie, saw a letter held out to him. He took it mechanically, supposing its messenger, hidden behind his large chair, was one of his waiting-maids. With a singular quickening of pulse, he recognized his daughter's writing.

She had waited all these silent years, she told him, because she was determined never to write to him again until they were rich enough for him to know that she did not write from any need of his help. They had passed these ten years in the West, and Heaven had prospered them. Her husband was a rich man now, and she wanted from her father only his love—wanted only, that death should not come between them, and either of them go to her mother's side without having been reconciled to the other.

"How did this come here?—who brought it?" demanded Mr. Golding, in his usual imperious manner.

"I did, grandpapa."

He sprang up at the soft timid voice, as if some fright took him, and stared at the lovely vision, standing there like a spirit on his hearth-stone, with her white face and her gleaming golden hair. Was it real? Where was he? Who could this child be? But, as he looked, the likeness flashed upon him—and he grew hungry to clasp her to him. It was the little Amy of the old days grown into beauty—for Amy had never been so wondrously fair as this.

"Come here, my child; don't be afraid. Tell me what your name is?"

"Amy, grandpapa."

Another Amy! Grandpapa! He felt the sobs rising up in his heart with a great flood of emotion; but he choked them back.

"What have they told you about me?" he rejoined, after a long pause. "Have they bid you hate me?"

"They always told me that you were far away toward where the sun rose; and if I were good they would bring me to see you some day. Every night I say in my prayers, 'God bless papa and mamma, and God bless grandpapa.'"

"Why *didn't* they bring you? What made them let you come alone?"

"Mamma sent me with John to give you the letter," was the simple answer. "The carriage is at the gate, waiting for me."

"Who is John?"

"Papa's servant."

"And—where are they staying?"

"At the hotel. We only got here this morning."

Mrs. Osgood, hovering in the hall, looked on in wonder. Her master was coming down stairs, calling for his hat and coat, and leading the child. He got into the carriage with her and it drove away. Mr Golding was wondering vaguely whether it were real.

They arrived at last, and the child led him in, opening a door at the end of a long corridor. She spoke cheeringly.

"Mamma, here's grandpapa. He said he would come back with me."

Mr. Golding's head went off in a swim. Advancing weakness tells upon people in such moments as these. He sat down; and there were Amy's arms—his own Amy's—about his neck. Which of the two sobbed the most, could not be told. Why had he never known what he lost through all those vanished years?

"Father, are we reconciled at last?"

"I don't know, my daughter; until you tell me whether you forgive me."

"There should be no talk about forgiveness," she said. "You went according to your own opinion of what was right. And perhaps I was to blame, too. Father, it is enough that God has brought us together again in peace. I thought that no one could resist my little Amy, least of all, her grandpapa."

He looked up. The child stood by, silently; the firelight glittering on her golden hair, her face shining strangely sweet. He put out his arms and drew her into them, close—where no child, not even his own, had ever nestled before. Oh how much he had missed in life!—he knew it now. He felt her clinging hold round his neck—her kisses dropped upon his face like the pitying dew from heaven; and he—was it himself, or another soul in his place?

"Father, see."

Amy's voice had a full, cheerful ring in it. Her married life had been happy. Mr. Golding turned at the call.

"Here are Harry and the boys waiting to speak to you," she said in a less assured tone.

He shook his son-in-law's hand heartily. Old feuds, old things were over now, and all was become new. In his heart, until that trouble came, he had always liked Harry Church. Then he looked at the two boys, brave, merry little fellows, of whom he might be proud.

Explanations ensued. Fortune had favored Mr. Church; they had come back for good, and were already looking out for a house.

"No house but mine," interrupted Joseph Golding. "It will want a tenant when I am gone. You must come home to-morrow."

"To-morrow will be Christmas-day," said his daughter, half-doubtingly.

"All the better. If Christmas was never kept in my house, it shall be now. I shall not live to see another, Amy."

She looked up at the changed, thin face, and could not contradict him. Some one, going out to the West Indies, had told them how Joseph Golding was breaking: the news had caused them to hurry home prematurely. Amy said to her husband that if her father died, unreconciled to her, she should be full of remorse forever.

"You will come home to-morrow, all of you," repeated Mr. Golding. "And mind, Amy, you do not go away again."

"But—if the children should be too much for you, father!"

"When they are, I'll tell you," he said, with a touch of the former gruffness. "The old house is large enough."

He went out; and found his way to the shops—open to the last on Christmas Eve in the old town—looking for Christmas gifts. New work for him!—but he entered into it earnestly. Perambulating the streets like a bewildered Santa Claus he went home laden with books, and toys, and jewels, and bon-bons. Mrs. Osgood lifted her hands, and thought the end of the world must be coming.

"Help me to put these things away, Osgood. Don't stare as if you were moon-struck. And, look here—there'll be company to dinner to-morrow. Mind you send in a good one."

"The best that ever was seen on a table, master—if it's for them I think it may be for."

"Well, it is. Miss Amy's coming home again."

"Heaven be praised, sir! The house has been but a dull one since she left it."

"They are all coming. And they will not go away again, Osgood. If you want more servants, you can get them."

"It's the best Christmas Box you could have given me, master."

"And they came. Amy and Amy's husband and the pretty boys were there; and, best of all, the sweet little girl with the golden hair, sitting next to grandpapa. It was too happy a party for loud mirth. And among them Joseph Golding saw, or fancied he saw, *another* face, over which, almost thirty years ago, he had watched the grave-sod piled—a face sad and wistful no longer, but bright with a strange glory. Close over beyond him she seemed to stand; and he heard, or fancied that he heard, a whisper from her parted lips, though it might have come only from his own heart,

"Peace on earth, and goodwill toward men."

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—The market continues dull. About 8000 bbls sold at $4,50@4,75 for superfine; $4,75@5 for extra; $5,25@6,25 for low grade and fancy Northwest extra family; $5,50@6 for Penna extra family; $5,75@6,25 for Indiana and Ohio family, and $6,50@7,50 ℔ bbl for fancy brands. Rye Flour—300 bbls sold at $5,25@5,50 ℔ bbl.

GRAIN—There is very little demand for Wheat—about 20,000 bus Penna, Western and Southern red sold at $1,25@1,27, and 4000 bus white at $1,45@1,55 ℔ bus. Rye—About 2500 bus sold at $1@1,02 for Western, and $1,05@1,08 for Penna. Corn—12,000 bus of old Western sold at $1,03@1,08; 4000 bus new white at 78@88c; 1,03@1,05 for old Penna and Delaware yellow, and 80@87c for new do. Oats—25,000 bus of Delaware and Penna sold at 56@58c ℔ bushel.

COTTON—Sales of 800 bales Middling Uplands at 25½c, and Gulf at 26½c.

BARK—16 hhds Quercitron sold at $20 ℔ ton for No 1.

FEATHERS—Sales prime Western at 75@85c. ℔ ℔.

SEEDS—Sales of 1000 bus Cloverseed at $8@8,12½ for prime quality. Flaxseed sells at $2,25@2,26 ℔ bus.

☞ Provisions and other articles same as last week.

☞ An English laborer's wife recently presented her husband with five children at a birth, all of whom were alive at last accounts. The poor woman has twenty-two children, including two sets of triplets. The Queen has sent her $35.

Just Out.

"*CHERRY PECTORAL TROCHES*,"

For Colds, Coughs, Sore Throat, and Bronchitis

None so good, none so pleasant, none cure so quick.

RUSHTON & Co., 10 Astor House, New York.

Use no more of those horrible tasted nauseating "*Brown Cubeb Things.*" oct23-3m

☞ Henry Ward Beecher says that preaching is a trade, and must be learned as such.

CRAMPTON'S IMPERIAL LAUNDRY SOAP contains a large per centage of VEGETABLE OIL, is warranted fully equal to the best imported Castile Soap, and at the same time possesses all the washing and cleansing properties of the celebrated French and German laundry soaps. CRAMPTON BROS., 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 Rutgers-place, and 33 and 35 Jefferson St. Office 84 Front Street, New York. oct2-6m

☞ A Rugby schoolboy was knocked down and trampled upon during a recent game of foot-ball, and if he survives, which is doubtful, will be a cripple for life.

HOLLOWAY'S OINTMENT relieves and soothes the severest pain of gout and rheumatism; every vestige of inflammation is removed within a few hours of the first application.

☞ At Darjeeling, in India, a fine light is given by gas generated from sewage.

Psychomancy, Fascination, or Soul-charming. 400 pages; cloth. This wonderful book has full instructions to enable the reader to fascinate either sex, or any animal at will. Mesmerism, Spiritualism, and hundreds of other curious experiments. In can be obtained by sending address, with postage, to T. W. EVANS & CO., 41 S. Eighth st., Philadelphia oct2-1y

☞ An old lady hearing of a pedestrian's "great feat," wondered why they didn't interfere with his fast walking.

To Soldiers, Heirs and Others—For collection of Pensions, Bounty, Pay, Prize Money, and all other claims. Address General Collection Agency, No. 125 South Seventh st., Philadelphia. ROBERT S. LEAGUE & Co., sep4-1y

☞ When a man does what he likes, and gets paid for it, he has found his vocation.

The Leaders.

The men who were most prominent as leaders in the rebellion are now occupied as follows: Jefferson Davis has gone into business at Memphis, Tennessee; John C. Breckinridge is practising law at Lexington, Kentucky; James M. Mason is on his farm at Winchester, Virginia; John Slidell was, at last accounts, living with his son-in-law, the banker Erlanger, near Paris; Judah P. Benjamin is in full practice at the London bar; Pierre Soule was, at last accounts, a hopeless invalid; R. M. T. Hunter is at his farm in Virginia; Robert Toombs, of Georgia, is practising law with great success; his colleague, Iverson, is a prosperous wood merchant at Macon; and A. H. Stephens is sinking gradually at his home in Crawfordsville, in the same state. General Lee is at the head of the University of Virginia at Lexington; Beauregard is President of a railroad at New Orleans; Mosby is practising law in the county courts of Virginia: "Commodore" Buchanan was lately at the head of an agricultural school in Maryland; Raphael Semmes is at Mobile; Bankhead Magruder is lecturing on Carlotta and Maximilian; ex-Governor Vance is practising law in North Carolina; James L. Orr is a state judge in South Carolina; Robert W. Johnson and Albert Pike have opened an office in Washington, District of Columbia; and ex-Senators Yulee and Mallory are alternately in Florida and New York. At the last accounts ex-Senator Wigfall, of Texas, was in Paris, George N. Sanders in London, and Beverly Tucker in Canada. Henry A. Wise, Thomas S. Bocock, J. A. Seddon, H. A. Richardson and Charles James Faulkner are still living in Virginia.

The Great Pictorial Annual.

Hostetter's United States Almanac for 1870, for distribution, *gratis*, throughout the United States and all civilized countries of the Western Hemisphere, will be published about the first of January, and all who wish to understand the true philosophy of health should read and ponder the valuable suggestions it contains. In addition to an admirable medical treatise on the causes, prevention and cure of a great variety of diseases, it embraces a large amount of information interesting to the merchant, the mechanic, the miner, the farmer, the planter, and professional man; and the calculations have been made for such meridians and latitudes as are most suitable for a correct and comprehensive National Calendar.

The nature, uses, and extraordinary sanitary effects of HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS, the staple tonic and alterative of more than half the Christian world, are fully set forth in its pages, which are also interspersed with pictorial illustrations, valuable recipes for the household and farm, humorous anecdotes, and other instructive and amusing reading matter, original and selected. Among the annuals to appear with the opening of the year, this will be one of the most useful, and *may be had for the asking*. Send for copies to the Central Manufactory, at Pittsburg, Pa., or to the nearest dealer in HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS. The BITTERS are sold in every city, town and village, and are extensively used throughout the entire civilized world. dec4-4t

☞ "Ned," a very modest Buffalo young man, has received a note, signed by fourteen Buffalo young ladies, to this effect:—"We, the undersigned, have been comparing notes, and find that you have been equally sweet to one and all of us—have paid the same compliments to each, and made love in the same terms in every case. We are indignant at such duplicity, and demand an explanation." "Ned" is probably going out to Utah, and wants to appear respectable in the eyes of the saints.

Interesting to Ladies.

It is now more than *nine years* since I purchased a Grover & Baker Sewing Machine. It has been in constant use for my family sewing ever since, and has done *several thousand dollars' worth of* work on heavy woolens beside. It has never been out of order, nor cost one cent for repairs since it became a "member of our family." We consider it truly "*our household friend.*"—*Mrs. Wm. H. Shelmire, No. 726 N. Sixteenth St., Philadelphia.*

☞ Not only shall we soon have Jane Lind Goldsmith, Adelina Patti Caux, Christina Nilsson, and other operatic celebrities to delight us, but Madame Rudersdorff, for several seasons one of the chief attractions at the Royal Italian Opera, London, is also coming. As an oratorio singer she has no superior. She has always been considered essential at the great musical performances of the Sacred Harmonic Society, and at the Sydenham Crystal Palace.

"Who Would Suffer!"

It is now 22 years since Dr. Tobias first introduced the "*Venetian Liniment*" in the United States, and never in a single instance has his medicine failed to do all, if not more than is stated in his pamphlet. As an external remedy in cases of chronic rheumatism, headache, toothache, bruises, burns, cuts, sores, swellings, sprains, stings of insects and pains in limbs, back and chest, its wonderful curative powers are miraculous. Taken internally for the cure of cholera, colic, diarrhœa, dysentery, sick headache and vomiting, its soothing and penetrating qualities are felt as soon as taken. The oath with which each bottle is accompanied will show that there is nothing injurious in its composition. Thousands of certificates have been received speaking of the rare virtues of this valuable article. Any person after having used it once will never be without it. Every bottle of the genuine has the signature of "S. I. Tobias" on the outside wrapper.

Sold by the druggists and storekeepers throughout the United States. Price, 50 cents. Depot, 10 Park Place, New York. dec4-4t

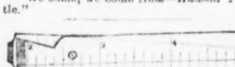
☞ A hymn book lately published by the Spiritualists makes an attempt to combine an index of authors and an index of first lines, occasionally abbreviating the latter, to save space, with some very curious results. References are given to:

"Do not wound the heart that loves—Dexter Smith."

"Have ye heard of the beautiful—Amanda T. Jones."

"Oh, I love the sparkling—Mrs. Cora Daniels."

"We come, we come from—Hudson Tuttle."



New Invention.—Twelve tools combined in one. To be carried in vest pocket: Pocket rule, Ruler, Square, Bevel, Screw Driver, Chisel, Compasses, Scissors, Button hole Cutter, Paper Knife, Eraser and Pencil-sharpener. Agents wanted. Sample (Polished Steel) sent by mail, prepaid, with terms to agents for 50 cents. Steel, silver plated, $1. Extra finished, gold plated, $2. Address COMBINATION TOOL CO., 95 Mercer St., New York. dec18-2t

Wonderful Rapidity of Photographic Action.

The image of the full moon can be fixed in less than one-fourth of a second, and that of the sun instantaneously. According to the experiments of Mr. Waterhouse, a space of time no longer than one twenty-seven-thousandth of a second is required to fix the solar image. Even this small fraction, however, inconceivably short as it appears, is a tolerable length of time compared with that in which photographs are taken by the electric flash. The duration of the illuminating sparks, according to the beautiful and trustworthy experiments of Mr. Wheatstone with his delicate chronoscope, does not exceed the millionth part of a second, and yet a clear and distinct photographic image is obtained by a single electric discharge. By this means may be shown the real forms of objects to which a deceptive appearance is given by their rapid movement. If a wheel on whose side any figure is drawn in conspicuous lines be made to rotate with the greatest possible velocity, the figure will present to the eye only a series of concentric bands of different shades. Let it now be photographed while in motion by the electric flash, and the wheel will appear stationary with the figure perfectly well defined. A vein of water issuing from a small orifice, which appears to the eye as smooth as a stem of crystal, if seen or photographed by the light of the electric discharge, is shown to be composed of drops variously disposed, and of various forms, some being elongated, others flattened, and others almost spherical.

R. R. R.

Radway's Ready Relief

Cures the Worst Pains in from One to Twenty Minutes.

NOT ONE HOUR

After reading this advertisement need any one

SUFFER WITH PAIN.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF is a cure for every pain.

It was the first, and is

THE ONLY PAIN REMEDY

That instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammations and cures congestions, whether of the lungs, stomach, bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application,

In from One to Twenty Minutes,

No matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the *RHEUMATIC*, bed-ridden, infirm, crippled, nervous, neuralgic, or prostrated with disease may suffer,

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

WILL AFFORD INSTANT RELIEF.

INFLAMMATION OF THE KIDNEYS,
INFLAMMATION OF THE BLADDER,
INFLAMMATION OF THE BOWELS,
CONGESTION OF THE LUNGS,
SORE THROAT, DIFFICULT BREATHING,
PALPITATION OF THE HEART,
HYSTERICS, CROUP, DIPTHERIA,
CATARRH, INFLUENZA,
HEADACHE, TOOTHACHE,
NEURALGIA, RHEUMATISM,
COLD CHILLS, AGUE CHILLS.

The application of the **Ready Relief** to the part or parts, where the pain or difficulty exists, will afford ease and comfort.

Twenty drops in a half tumbler of water will, in a few minutes, cure CRAMPS, SPASMS, SOUR STOMACH, HEARTBURN, SICK HEADACHE, DIARRHEA, DYSENTERY, COLIC, WIND IN THE BOWELS, and all INTERNAL PAINS.

Travelers should always carry a bottle of **Radway's Relief** with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French brandy or bitters as a stimulant.

FEVER AND AGUE.

Fever and Ague cured for fifty cents. There is not a remedial agent in this world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other malarious, bilious, scarlet, typhoid, yellow, and other fevers (aided by *RADWAY'S PILLS*), so quick as *RADWAY'S READY RELIEF*. Fifty cents per bottle.

Dr. Radway's Perfect Purgative Pills, Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys, bladder, nervous diseases, headache, constipation, costiveness, indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, billious fever, inflammation of the bowels, piles, and all derangements of the internal viscera. Warranted to effect a positive cure. Price 25 cents per box.

Read FALSE AND TRUE. Send one letter stamp to Radway & Co., No. 87 Maiden Lane, New York. Information worth thousands will be sent you.

Sold by Druggists. aug7-tf

☞ AN INDIGNANT CHINAMAN.—Chinese laundrymen have their preferences and dislikes just as much as their competitors of the other sex. One out in Iowa vents himself thus:—"Printee man shirts wash like d—l; scrubee skin off hands; inkee do d—l to clean off; no want washee for printee; charges two dollar dozen; cuss 'em."

A NEGLECTED cough, cold, or sore throat which might be checked by a simple remedy, like "*Brown's Bronchial Troches*," if allowed to progress may terminate seriously. For bronchitis, asthma, catarrh, and consumptive coughs, "*The Troches*" are used with advantage, giving oftentimes immediate relief. Singers and public speakers will find them also excellent to clear the voice and render articulation wonderfully easy.

MARRIAGES.

☞ Marriage notices must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 9th instant, by the Rev. J. S. Kennard, Mr. SAMUEL WEBSTER to Miss ANNA PECHIN, both of this city.

On the 2d instant, by the Rev. J. H. Peters, WILLIAM MILLARD, Esq., to Mrs. ANNIE C. HAND both of this city.

On the 7th instant, by the Rev. J. H. Alday, Mr. DAVID S. GENDELL to Miss ANNIE E. G. ASHBROOK, daughter of Jas. Ashbrook, Esq., both of this city.

On the 14th instant, by the Rev. W. C. Robinson, Mr. W. A. MCNAMEE to Miss ANNIE J. THOMPSON, of Cecil County, Md.

On the 14th instant, by the Rev. Francis Church, Mr. ALEXANDER P. MCNICHOLL to Miss AGNES MACKIE, both of this city.

On the 7th instant, by the Rev. John Ruth, WILLIAM H. REDHEFFER to ADRIENNE T. NICHOLS, both of this city.

DEATHS.

☞ Notices of Deaths must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 14th instant, JOSEPH MERRICK, aged 70 years.

On the 13th instant, SARAH, daughter of David and Elizabeth Auld, aged 24 years.

On the 15th instant, JOHN PATTERSON, in his 76th year.

On the 12th instant, EDWARD S. FALLEN, in his 46th year.

On the 12th instant, Mr. WILLIAM P. MORT, in his 72d year.

On the 12th instant, DAVID ALEXANDER, aged 27 years.

On the 11th instant, THOMAS W. RICHARDSON, in his 27th year.

On the 11th instant, SAMUEL SIMPSON, in his 72d year.

On the 11th instant, CHARLES A., son of Wm. R. and Rebecca Penington, aged 27 years.

THE COMING YEAR.

THREE MONTHS GRATIS

TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

In THE POST of October 2d, we commenced a new and brilliant Novelet written by one of the most talented of our lady authors. It is entitled

A Family Failing.

BY ELIZABETH PRESCOTT, Author of "Between Two," "How a Woman Had Her Way," &c.

We are also now publishing

George Canterbury's Will.

By **Mrs. HENRY WOOD**, Author of "East Lynne," "Roland Yorke," &c.

These will be followed by the following (among other) Novelets:

Under a Ban.

By **AMANDA M. DOUGLAS**, Author of "Cut Adrift," "The Debarry Fortune," &c., &c.

Leonie's Mystery.

By **FRANK LEE BENEDICT**, Author of "Dora Castell," &c.

Bessy Rane.

By **Mrs. HENRY WOOD**, Author of "East Lynne," "George Canterbury's Will," &c.

A Novelet

By **MRS. MARGARET HOSMER**, Author of "The Mystery of the Reefs," &c.

Who Told?

By **ELIZABETH PRESCOTT**, Author of "Between Two," "A Family Failing," &c.

Besides our Novelets by Miss Prescott, Miss Douglas, Mrs. Wood, Frank Lee Benedict, Mrs. Hosmer, &c., we also give in Stories, Sketches, &c.,

The Gems of the English Magazines.

And also NEWS, AGRICULTURAL ARTICLES, POETRY, WIT and HUMOR, RIDDLES, RECEIPTS, &c.

Our new Premium Steel Engraving is called "TAKING THE MEASURE OF THE WEDDING RING,"—is 18 by 24 inches—and will probably be the most attractive engraving we have ever issued. *It was engraved in England, at a cost of $2,000.* A copy of this, or of either of our other large and beautiful steel Engravings—"The Song of Home at Sea," "Washington at Mount Vernon," "One of Life's Happy Hours," or "Everett in His Library"—will be given to every full ($2.50) subscriber, and also to every person sending on a club. Members of a Club, wishing an Engraving, must remit one dollar extra. These engravings, when framed, are beautiful ornaments for the parlor or library.

* * *

We make the following *Special Offer* to New Subscribers. We shall begin the subscriptions of all NEW subscribers for 1870 with the paper of October 2, which contains the commencement of Miss Prescott's new and brilliant Novelet, "A FAMILY FAILING," until the large extra edition of that date is exhausted. This will be thirteen papers in addition to the regular weekly numbers for 1870, or fifteen months in all! When our extra edition is exhausted, the names of all *new* subscribers for 1870 shall be entered on our list the very week they are received. *Of course those who send in their names early will receive the full number of extra papers.*

☞ *At the present date we have a large number of the back papers to October 2d still on hand.*

* * *

This offer applies to all *new* subscribers, single or in clubs. And our Club terms are so very low, as compared with other first-class literary weeklies, that clubs should be obtained with the greatest ease. And the getter up of a club of Five or over, gets not only the Premium Engraving for his trouble, but a free copy of the paper also.

While we offer thus a special inducement to *new* subscribers, our *old* subscribers will reap the benefit of the increased circulation which it brings us, in the improvement of our paper, and in the ease of getting up clubs—and therefore it is to their interest to speak a good word for us to their friends. And in proportion as patronage is extended to us, are we able to make THE POST more and more worthy of their support.

When it is considered that the terms of THE POST are so much lower than those of any other First-class Literary Weekly, we think we deserve an even more liberal support from an appreciative public than we have ever yet received.

We trust that those of our subscribers who design making up clubs, will be in the field as early as possible, and make large additions to their lists. Our prices to club subscribers are so low, that if the matter is properly explained, very few who desire a first-class literary paper will hesitate to subscribe at once, and thank the getter-up of the club for calling the paper to their notice.

See TERMS under editorial head. Sample numbers (postage paid) are sent for 5 cents.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

BY FLORENCE PERCY.

The children sung a song this Christmas morning,
Mellow and clear, outside my chamber door,
Waking me softly from my pleasant dreaming
Of unforgotten Christmas days of yore.

Sweetly they sung, my neighbor's happy children,
Two merry girls and one glad-hearted boy,
Repeating oft their song's rejoicing burden,—
"On Christmas morn the angels sing for joy!"

Sweetly they sung; but ah! their cheerful voices
Broke up my soul's deep fount of hidden woe;
And pressing down my face against the pillow,
I let the bitter torrent overflow.

Missing the little child that warbled softly
Two years ago to-day a song like this,
And when the joyful melody was ended,
Held up her sweet mouth for a Christmas kiss.

Only one Christmas Eve my fair-eyed darling
Lisped of dear Santa Claus her dreams among;
Only one Christmas morn, white-robed and joyful—
Lifted her clear voice in a Christmas song.

I see her little figure standing tiptoe,
To hang her dainty stocking on the wall;—
Oh, sinless heart! oh, perfect faith of childhood,
Believing everything and trusting all!

Peace, aching heart! oh let me trust entirely,
With faith and strength that nothing can destroy,
That my sweet baby is among the angels,
Who, on this Christmas morning, sing for joy!

A Night in Standring Hall.

It was Christmas time. And although there was no snow upon the ground, as there should have been if the artists engaged on the illustrated papers know anything at all about the signs of the seasons, the lake in the park was frozen over, and every preparation was made in Standring Hall to carry out the festivities of the merry Yule-tide in the good old traditional style.

Standring Hall was just the house in which anybody, with a properly-constituted mind, would like to pass his Christmas holidays. It was modern enough to be comfortable, and old enough to be romantic. The dark passages, winding stairs, and gloomy chambers which connected the modern portion of the building with the famous old library in the west wing, were redolent of family histories, of long-forgotten stories of love and war, of ghosts and apparitions. And when the wind was in a particular quarter (the south-east, I think it was), there were few of the servants who cared, after nightfall, to hear it howling dismally down the cowled chimneys of the deserted chambers, or to listen to the hooting of the owls, who would insist upon searching in the ivy for the bats, and mice, and small birds who made their homes therein.

Once seated, however, either at the well-spread table in the dining room, with numerous lights, reflected for an indefinite number of times in the lofty pier-glasses over the large fire-places at each end of the room, or before a blazing fire in the cozy, comfortable drawing-room, all thoughts of mediæval romance vanished from the mind, and the fortunate visitor gave himself up to a happy contemplation of the luxuries of the nineteenth century.

The people, too, were as nice as the place. Sir Thomas Standring himself, a man of about sixty-two or sixty-three years of age, was a hale and hearty specimen of the English country gentleman. Somewhat obstinate, impetuous, and self-willed he was, it is true, but generous and kindly, both to his friends and to his dependents. Fond of field sports of all kinds, and not much given to politics, he was at the same time a man of high culture and very extensive reading. Indeed, it was said that a passionate fondness for books had been hereditary in the Standring family for centuries, and the assertion was to some extent borne out by the fact that the library, already spoken of, was by far the finest room in the house, while its contents far eclipsed any other collection in the county.

If Lady Standring had any ambition in the world, I think it must have been to place herself in the position of benefactress to every one with whom she came in contact, and certainly she very nearly succeeded. There never was a more agreeable specimen of the Lady Bountiful. She always seemed to be doing the right thing at the right moment, and to do it in such a manner that you fancied for a moment that, whether she proposed the excursion you had been puzzling your brains to arrange, pleaded forgiveness for some unlucky poacher, or bestowed a bottle of wine, a basin of soup, and a blanket, on some bedridden old pensioner, she was receiving, not conferring, a favor. It always appeared, in some curious manner, that no one ever felt grateful to Lady Standring, but without exactly knowing why, everybody loved her, and this suited the dear old lady much better.

This worthy couple had two children, Frank and Lucy, of whom I will only say at present, that Frank had been my schoolfellow at Eton, my closest friend at Oxford, and that when I received an invitation from him to spend my Christmas holidays at the Hall, no small part of my pleasure in accepting arose from the anticipated delight of once more seeing his sister.

Of myself, it will be sufficient to say that I had, at the time my story opens, been some few months called to the bar, and thanks to a considerable amount of family influence, had every prospect of a sufficient number of briefs to start with. Whether my good fortune lasted would, of course, depend upon myself; but it is not every young man who has an opportunity of showing what stuff he is made of, and I meant to make the most of my good fortune.

Accordingly, I had been working very hard, and it was therefore with a keen sense of enjoyment that I sprang out of bed at about seven o'clock in the morning of the 23d of December, 1858, and proceeded hastily to pack a small portmanteau with the changes of raiment necessary for my personal adornment during my stay in far-off Devon.

Having posted an announcement on my door that I was "out of town, and should return next week," I hastened out, portmanteau in hand, thinking that Old Square itself looked quite cheerful and festive under the combined influences of a sharp frost and a wintry sun, which was struggling to rise, but seemingly with far less alacrity than I had already displayed myself. A long and cold railway journey, made endurable by rugs, "Christmas numbers," and newspapers, with some little assistance from a pipe, brought me to Standring St. Mary, at which pretty little station Frank was awaiting me with a dog-cart. A hearty shake of the hand, an exchange of seasonable compliments, and a hurried inquiry after mutual friends, and we mounted the dog-cart and started rapidly on our six miles' drive to the Hall, which we reached as the shades of night were falling on the scene.

"Now, old boy," said Frank, as we entered, "off to your room and tittivate, and by the time you are ready to come down dinner will be ready also."

But I need say nothing about the dinner, or the kindly welcome I received from the family of my old friend. Suffice it to say, I soon found myself quite at home, and when we assembled later in the evening in the library, I felt like one of the family. I have already spoken of the size of this room; it is necessary to say a little more about it. It was a large irregular place, of no describable shape, with nooks and corners as large as the noble reception rooms of a desirable villa residence, with windows on three sides of it. It was lighted by means of a large chandelier, with numerous branches for wax candles, which left many of the recesses spoken of in very deep shadow. All around it were massive book-cases of black oak grotesquely carved, and the chairs and tables were all of the same wood, the only relief to the sombre character of the furniture springing from the bright bindings of some of the books, and from some half-dozen statues occupying niches in various parts of the chamber.

It need hardly be said that this was not the room usually selected by the family to pass their evenings in; but on this particular occasion, Miss Standring herself had insisted on our proceeding there, to witness and advise upon the finishing touches to the Christmas decorations she had been devising in preparation for a ball which was to be given on the succeeding evening. The adornments in question consisted entirely of holly, misletoe, ivy, and laurel; and by the exercise of a very correct taste Lucy Standring had contrived, by the aid of her evergreens, to heighten the quaint, sombre, and even weird, character of the apartment. The grotesque heads and impossible animals carved on the book-cases and wainscot, all surrounded or surmounted by wreaths of evergreens, looked in the flickering light more grotesque and more impossible than ever. So when, after admiring, criticising, and complimenting Miss Lucy's work, we gathered round one of the three large fire-places, I could not help exclaiming—

"The very place for a ghost story. Surely some one should invent some spectral tradition to fit this place of fantastic lights and shadows."

I spoke thoughtlessly, and certainly there was nothing in the remark to call for any particular comment, but to my surprise I noticed that Lady Standring turned a shade paler than before, while her husband "pished" uneasily, as though he wished I had not started the subject.

"No need to invent the tradition, Herbert, my boy!" exclaimed Frank, with a light laugh. "We have got as respectable a ghost of our own as any old family could desire, and this very room is the scene of his nocturnal rambles."

"Really?" I inquired.

"Fact, I assure you. I can't say I have ever seen his ghostship myself."

"And I trust you never will," interrupted his mother, almost anxiously.

"I have a notion," Frank went on, "that both my respected parents have a sort of dim faith in his existence."

"Nonsense, Frank," said the old baronet, laughing; but the laugh sounded somewhat forced.

"And I am sure," continued the son, "that the majority of the servants would rather leave the Hall, without warning or wages, than come into the library alone in the dark."

"What is the character of the gentleman?" I inquired.

"Oh! his character is as bad as bad can be, because his appearance is always supposed to forbode death or misfortune to some member of our house; and, curiously enough, *after* anything of the sort has occurred, it generally turns out that he was seen the night before."

"Then I suppose there is a history connected with him?"

"A most exciting one, I promise you."

"I should like to hear it much, if I am not venturing on forbidden ground in asking for it."

"It is an absurd business altogether," said Sir Thomas, hastily; "only endurable on account of its antiquity, but certainly not worth listening to as a story. However, if you want to hear it, and can persuade Lucy to tell it to you, you cannot possibly have more appropriate surroundings."

A very little pressing sufficed, and Lucy proceeded to relate the story, which I am about to repeat in as nearly as possible her own words.

A casual glance at the walls of this library would be sufficient to convince you that the Standrings are a race of bibliomaniacs, and I must add, that we ourselves fondly cherish a belief that our ancestors shared this weakness at a time when, excepting in the Church, it was rare to find a man who could even read and write. Be this as it may, tradition asserts that one of the most energetic collectors of manuscripts and illuminated missals our family has produced was a certain Sir Hugh de Standring, who, after having passed his youth in fighting in the Holy Land and in France, under Richard Cœur de Lion, retired to his home on his king's death, and devoted the rest of his life to books. By all accounts, save for the one event I am about to relate, he was a man of whom his descendants may well be proud. A just lord, when injustice was the rule—a protector of the weak against the strong, at a time when the parasites of King John and his son Henry oppressed all over whom they had power—he was known far and wide as the good Sir Hugh. But a black cloud was to obscure the brightness of his fame, and to bring disgrace and misfortune on his house, and in this wise it happened.

One dark and stormy night in winter, long after the hour when in those primitive times doors were closed, and when all but the warders and the studious lord of the Hall himself had retired to rest, a belated monk, on his way from an abbey in Cornwall to Rome, whither he was bound on a pilgrimage, craved hospitality and shelter. Of course, both were immediately at his service, and he was ushered into this very room, where Sir Hugh, as usual, was poring over his manuscripts.

After a hearty supper the monk drew up to the fire, and the host and guest, soon discovering they were of kindred tastes, a long conversation ensued between them, and the pilgrim was shown all the treasures of the library. After some time the monk, wishing probably to make some return for the hospitality he had received, drew from the folds of his frock a parcel enveloped in many coverings, which he proceeded to remove, explaining meanwhile that he held the work of his life, on which no human eye had looked but his Abbott's and his own.

The treasure produced proved to be a missal, so exquisitely illuminated, that Sir Hugh confessed he had never seen anything at all fit to be compared with it.

For a time he was contented with examining and admiring the choice work, but soon the desire of possession sprung up, and he expressed a wish to purchase it. But it was of no use. Although he offered, first, large sums of money to the monk himself, then to add rich endowments to his monastery, and, finally, even to build and endow a new abbey at Standring, all his offers were refused. The worthy man was going to Rome, there to lay his life's work as an offering at the feet of the holy father himself, and not for all the broad acres of Standring would he deviate from his intention. Finding all his efforts to purchase the book fruitless, Sir Hugh at last desisted, and soon afterwards the monk retired, first securing his book once more in his robe. Left alone, Sir Hugh could think of nothing but the rich prize so near him, and yet so far beyond his grasp; and to those who like myself have witnessed the deadly feuds and bitter animosities which often spring up between rival collectors, over a black letter pamphlet, or an *editio princeps*, it will hardly seem surprising that be began to hate the unfortunate monk with a deadly hatred, and to feel an uncontrollable desire to possess his book.

Hours passed before his madness, for such it must have been, could prompt him to an act of treachery towards his guest, but at last he persuaded himself, that he but wished to see the book once more, and there could be no harm in abstracting it from the person of its sleeping owner for a few hours. Stifling all the whisperings of his conscience, he proceeded stealthily to the monk's chamber. He was sleeping soundly, and clutching his treasure to his breast, but Sir Hugh easily released the hold of the fingers, and, obtaining possession of his coveted prize, hurriedly left the chamber and returned to the library.

Eagerly he began to examine and re-examine the book, and as he gazed, and wondered, and admired the patience and the skill which had been lavished upon its brilliant pages, the feeling of ownership grew strong upon him, and he was vowing inwardly that only with life would he part with it, when suddenly the door opened, and looking up guiltily he saw the monk in his robe, and with his cowl drawn on to his head, gazing eagerly at his missal, with outstretched hand and pointing finger; and as he rose to confront him, his victim, rushing towards the table, shrieked out—

"My book, my book, give me my book!"

What happened next no man knows, but certain it was that no one saw the monk leave Standring Hall, and certain, too, it was, that from that night forth Sir Hugh was an altered man. All his old cheerfulness deserted him, he became morose and shunned all companionship, he seemed to shudder at the embraces of his wife and children, and at length even the servants who had once loved him so deeply dreaded to encounter him; and strange stories were current of his midnight vigils, of his constant walks to and fro, from the library to the room in which the monk had slept, and of his mysterious mutterings when he thought none were near.

So years went on. At length a day arrived when Standring Hall was the scene of mirth and festivity, for young Alaric, Sir Hugh's eldest son, had taken to wife the lovely Emmeline, heiress of his neighbor, the great Lord of Otteries. For once Sir Hugh threw off his gloom and appeared again the gay and cheerful companion his old friends could remember twenty years before. For a time all went well, and towards evening Sir Hugh invited the Bishop of Exeter, who had married the young couple, and some other churchmen and learned men, to inspect the treasures of his library, which in those days was a greater wonder than it is now. Many were the manuscripts that were pored over, many the illuminations that were admired, till, the bishop, taking a handsomely-bound volume from yonder shelf, was asking some question as to its character, when Sir Hugh started suddenly forward, and exclaiming—"Pardon me, my lord bishop, that is private," snatched it from his hand before he had had time even to open it.

At that moment the apartment was lighted up by a dazzling vivid flash of lightning, followed by a crashing peal of thunder that shook the hall to its foundations; and as all were looking at each other in astonishment, a press which stood in that corner (and Lucy pointed towards the opposite end of the room), burst open with a loud crash, and disclosed the figure of a monk habited in robe and cowl, with a face of ghastly whiteness, and a broad red streak upon his breast, who, stretching out his hand and pointing his finger at Sir Hugh, shrieked wildly—

"My book! my book! Give me my book!"

Amazement and terror were seated on every face, and one of the churchmen, bolder than the rest, was commencing *Exorciso te*, when he was stopped by the voice of Sir Hugh shouting—

"Never! never with my life! I defy you!"

And with the words came a second flash, a second crash, and then Sir Hugh was seen lying prone upon the floor, and the doors of the press closed as suddenly as they had opened.

All rushed to Sir Hugh to raise him, but he was dead, and the storm passed away.

The press was opened, and in it was discovered the skeleton of a man clothed in the dress of a monk, and through the breast of his robe was a rent, such as might have been made by a sword, and below it a broad red stain.

Sir Hugh was buried with his fathers, and masses were said for his soul, and his son Alaric founded the monastery of Standring St. Mary's, and endowed it with broad pieces and broader lands; but from that time to this, whenever misfortune has hovered over the house of Standring, the monk has appeared to demand his book, but as yet without success, in proof of which examine it for yourself.

And as she spoke Lucy Standring rose from her seat, and taking a volume from a shelf threw it on the table beside me.

I confess I started. This was really in a sort of way being brought into actual contact with a ghost. Quickly recovering myself, however, I thanked Miss Standring for her story, and began to examine the book from which all these events had sprung. It was undoubtedly very beautiful, and when I remembered how in our own times men of the highest positions, and of the most unblemished characters in every other respect, had actually allowed their mania for collecting to tempt them into the crime of stealing books from museums and public libraries, I could easily understand that, six or seven hundred years ago, an irresponsible lord of the soil, with the same passion, might have been tempted to commit murder to obtain so throughly unique a specimen of work. I said something to this effect.

"That is all very well," said Sir Thomas, "but it is only fair to tell you that the greatest authority on these matters in England, or indeed in the world, assures me most positively that the book in your hand was the work of a Frenchman in the fifteenth century, which rather militates against the story."

"In such a case," I replied, "I think I should be inclined, when the facts contradicted the story, to quote 'so much the worse for the facts.'"

"I, for one, do not mean to have my story upset by any of your nasty old bookworms, papa, dear," said Lucy; "besides, there is no doubt about the fact, that Sir Alaric did build Standring St. Mary's, and that he did it in consequence of his father's crime."

"Yes. I believe this much of the story," put in Frank; "I think it is likely that good Sir Hugh killed a monk, that the monk deserved it, that some other monks found it out, and persuaded his son that to build them an abbey was the proper thing to do. It is even possible that Sir Hugh was killed by lightning, but the book, and the press, and the apparition are additions of a later date."

Much more was said on the subject, which would be uninteresting to repeat, and then by a natural transition we glided into a discussion upon ghosts and apparitions in general, and thence to spiritualism and other kindred matters; and I remembered afterwards, though I hardly noticed it then, that for the first time in my life I felt inclined to admit that there might be more foundation for the wonderful events constantly being made public, than was to be derived from the imagination of believers, and that indeed "there are more things in heaven and earth, than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

After the family had separated for the night, and Frank and myself were indulging ourselves with a pipe and glass of brandy-and-water by way of nightcap, I still harped upon the same string, until my companion stopped me with one of his gay laughs, which were always ready to turn everything into food for jest.

The fact was, as I have already said, I had been very hard at work in London, my brain had been kept at the highest point of tension for weeks, almost months, and now that the strings were suddenly relaxed, I was mentally in a weak and nervous state of excitement, ready to receive any and every external impression, however absurd, on the slightest provocation, and without the slightest examination.

However, Frank's laugh did me good, and our conversation turned into a fresh groove; and an hour passed rapidly and pleasantly away in recalling memories of schoolfellows we had never met since we left Eton, and of later companions, whose paths in life still, to some extent, travelled with our own.

Thus, when we rose to seek our respective bedrooms, I had quite forgotten all about ghosts and apparitions, monks, missals, and family traditions.

I am thus particular in recalling these trivial circumstances, in order that the reader may the more easily understand what is to follow.

After leaving the library, each with a chamber candlestick in his hands, Frank and myself traversed a long passage, ascended a short flight of stairs, and then found ourselves in a corridor out of which several doors opened, and cross passages issued. Stopping at the first of these intersections, Frank said,

"My room lies this way; yours is the last one the other side of this corridor. Can you find it by yourself?"

"Certainly I can: do not come any further," I replied.

"All right; then good night, and pleasant dreams to you."

"Good night, old boy," I answered, and Frank immediately turned off, and I, too, went on my way. A moment later I heard his door close, and at the same instant, probably by a gust of wind from a window inadvertantly left open, my candle was extinguished. With a lighted candle in my hand, I had confidently expressed my ability to find my bed-room, but in the dark it was quite another affair. There were several doors in the corridor, but I did not know how many, so that I could not count my way along. Moreover, I had never been to the end of the passage, so that it might end with a staircase, a window, or a blank wall for anything I knew to the contrary. Then, again, although I knew the direction in which Frank had gone, I was by no means certain as to where I could find him.

This was a pleasant position, truly! In a strange house, full of mysterious passages and unexpected staircases, at one o'clock in the morning, without a light. I stood for a moment anathematising all thoughtless servants, who neglected to add lucifer matches to chamber candlesticks. Then a brilliant idea flashed across my mind—almost brilliant enough, indeed, to have lighted the candle itself, but, unfortunately, not quite. Acting upon my idea I felt in my pocket and found my fusee case. Alas! I had smoked all the way from London, and so had my fellow-passengers, one or two of whom were short of lights, so I had but one vesuvian left, and that one, when I struck it, fizzed splendidly, and would have lighted pipe or cigar beautifully, for any one who had learned the way to do it, by studying the directions on each box, but it would not flame, and consequently would not light a candle.

By this time, what with the awkwardness of my position, my ignorance of what might be about the house in the shape of watchdogs or watchmen, who would put an end to me first, and inquire into my business afterwards, and the mysterious, nerve-randing noises which one always hears when in the dark in a strange place, I was getting into a frame of mind that was anything but enviable.

I now remembered, however, that although the lights in the library had all been extinguished by Frank before we left, a box of vestas had been placed upon the table for our cigars; besides, even if I could not find this, there must surely be flame enough left in the fireplace to light a piece of paper. Reflecting thus, I began to retrace my steps. Groping my way carefully, starting at every sound I made, I found the staircase, descended it, nearly shook the breath out of my body by missing the last step, recovered myself, found my way along the passage, opened the library door, and——

"Great heaven!—the monk himself—by all that's horrible!"

And so saying, in my amazement, I dropped the candlestick, which clattered on the stone-flooring of the passage with a din which in my ears at that moment sounded horrible; and at the same time the half-opened door, which was provided with a spring hinge, closed of its own accord!

Yes! There was no mistake about it. This was no trick of the imagination. I would have sworn to what I had seen in any court of justice in the kingdom.

Standing close to the table on which we had left the fatal missal, *there was the monk*, with his flowing robe, his cowl drawn half over his face, the ghastly whiteness of which was startlingly revealed by the rays of the moon which fell full upon it, and with outstretched hand, as white as the face, he was pointing directly at his cherished volume—close to which, I remembered with a shudder, were the vestas I was seeking.

It is all very well for the intrepid reader, who has no belief in the supernatural, to laugh at my weakness, but I honestly confess that I was thoroughly frightened. And, by the way, let me observe in parenthesis, that I have always remarked that those good people, who are so fond of saying that they have no fear of spirits, have never had the good fortune to see any.

For a few moments I stood outside that door bereft of motion, almost of sense, not daring to re-enter, ashamed to retreat. By degrees I recovered some little presence of mind, and then began to persuade myself that I had been deceived by some imaginary shadow. But no, it was too real, too palpable, I could swear to that.

Then it struck me that it was a trick of Frank's. But I dismissed the notion at once. In the first place, he was not given to practical jokes; in the second, he had no notion that I should return to the library.

It has often surprised me since, considering how terribly frightened I undoubtedly was, that I could stand and reason so calmly as I did. But so it was. I only record a fact. I do not attempt to explain this psychological mystery.

This, however, is a digression; but so short a one may, I hope, be pardoned.

Still certain that I had not been misled by imagination, but still unwilling to admit any supernatural agency, I next lighted on what seemed a more feasible explanation of the mystery.

"It is possible," I thought, "that some professional thief, or some dishonest servant, knowing the value of some of the books in the library, and having heard this tradition, has come on a burglarious expedition, and assumed this disguise as his surest safeguard in case of surprise.

This thought restored all my courage, and I advanced boldly to the door, and again opened it widely.

But, horror of horrors! there still stood the monk, on the same spot, in the same attitude; and certainly that ghastly face could not belong to living man. Now, too, I saw upon the dark breast a bright streak, the color of which I, of course, could not discern, but which it required but little imagination to picture as the broad red stain of blood.

I waited for no more. I turned and fled precipitately, along the passage, up the stairs (how, I know not), down the turning to the left, which Frank had taken on leaving me, until I was arrested by a light shining through a keyhole.

I knocked loudly at the door.

"Hallo! Who's there? What's the matter?"

Thank heaven, it was Frank's voice.

"'Tis I, Herbert Walton; open the door. Quick!"

He did so, and I hastily entered the room, and, utterly exhausted by the fierce mental emotion I had passed through, almost fell into a chair.

Frank looked astonished, as well he might.

"For heaven's sake, Herbert!" he exclaimed, "tell me what's the matter? Are you ill? You look as if you had seen a ghost."

"Hush!" I said, rising excitedly from my chair. "I have—the monk—the monk!"

Loud and long sounded out Frank's clear laugh, until I, myself, under the combined influence of light and companionship, almost felt inclined to doubt the evidence of my senses.

At last he said:

"Why, Herbert, old boy, you have had a nightmare!" and again he laughed.

"I have not even been to bed."

"But where did you see this most mysterious gentleman?" he asked.

I told him the whole story. When I had finished, for once in his life, he looked grave.

"This must be inquired into," he said; "there must be some motive in getting up a scheme of this sort—for of course the ghost-theory is all nonsense, and equally of course you were not the intended victim of the plot, whatever it is. I must watch, and if I cannot find it out to-night, I will continue to watch until I do. Will you join me in the task?"

"With all my heart, and all my head," I answered promptly.

"'Tis well. Now, tell me, have you had enough of it for one night, or will you come back to the library with me now? Don't go unless you like, old fellow; I would just as soon go alone."

"I will go with you, certainly."

"All right, then, come along. Oh, have some brandy first; I have some here, and by Jove you need it, after your experiences."

He was quite right—I did need it, and was right glad to have it.

"One thing more," he added; "if we do not unravel this mystery to-night, not a word to a soul. You know the tradition about the monk's appearance—and, in spite of herself, the story might worry my mother."

"I will be silent, depend upon it."

During this short conversation, Frank had taken from a drawer, a revolver, and carefully examined it.

"Six chambers, all loaded," he remarked, quietly; "there is nothing like being prepared. Now, you bring the light and come along."

He went first, and from his greater familiarity with the way, his impatience easily enabled him to outstrip me, so that I was only just entering the long passage, so often spoken of, when he was at the library door.

He opened it quickly—and the next second I was more horror-stricken than surprised, when he let it again swing to, and, turning to me, exclaimed—

"By Jove! you're right; he's there still."

By this time I was by his side, and though he was evidently more startled than he cared to admit, he said, determinedly—

"However, ghost or man, I mean to know all about it."

So saying, he again threw the door open to its full width, and rushed across the room at full speed—I following more slowly.

As he reached the spot, the light I carried fell full upon the spectre, and he stopped suddenly, and once more burst into a loud and uncontrollable fit of most hilarious laughter.

I, too, looked to see what caused his mirth—and must confess I never felt a more perfect fool in all my life.

As I realized to myself how completely I had laid myself open to all Frank's most powerful batteries of "chaff" for weeks to come, I would have given much to have recalled my visit to his room.

I would rather have believed all my life that I had seen a real ghost.

But I had really seen nothing of the sort.

The mystery is very simple, and a very few words will explain it.

While Lucy Standring was engaged on her Christmas decorations she wished to give the gardeners some directions as to what she wanted, and before going out into the grounds had put on a large travelling cloak. On her return, taking it off in the library, she threw it carelessly on to a life-size statue of her grandfather, Sir John Standring, who was a knight of the shire for his native county, and was "taken" in the act of addressing the "House." The hood of the cloak had fallen into its natural place on his head, and so, what with the red tassels, the marble face, and outstretched hand, with the aid of the moon's rays, my mistake was easily accounted for.

At breakfast-time next morning Frank cheerfully related my adventures, with many additions and ornamentations of his own, and I got unmercifully quizzed; but I had my compensations even then.

I have, however, never been allowed to forget my first night at Standring Hall; and only yesterday I heard my eldest son, a sturdy young urchin of eight summers, listening breathlessly to his Uncle Frank's story of "Papa's Ghost."

◆

LEARN A LITTLE EVERY DAY.

Little rills make wider streamlets,
Streamlets swell the river's flow;
Rivers join the mountain billows,
Onward, onward as they go!
Life is made of smallest fragments,
Shade and sunshine, work and play:
So may we, with greatest profit,
Learn a little every day.

Tiny seeds make boundless harvests,
Drops of rain compose the showers,
Seconds make the flying minutes,
And the minutes make the hours!
Let us hasten, then, and catch them
As they pass us on the way;
And with honest, true endeavor
Learn a little every day.

Let us read some striking passage,
Cull a verse from every page;
Here a line, and there a sentence,
'Gainst the lonely time of age!
At our work, or by the wayside,
While the sunshine's making hay;
Thus we may, by help of study,
Learn a little every day.

GEORGE CANTERBURY'S WILL.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD.

AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE," "THE RED COURT FARM," &c.

CHAPTER XXIV.

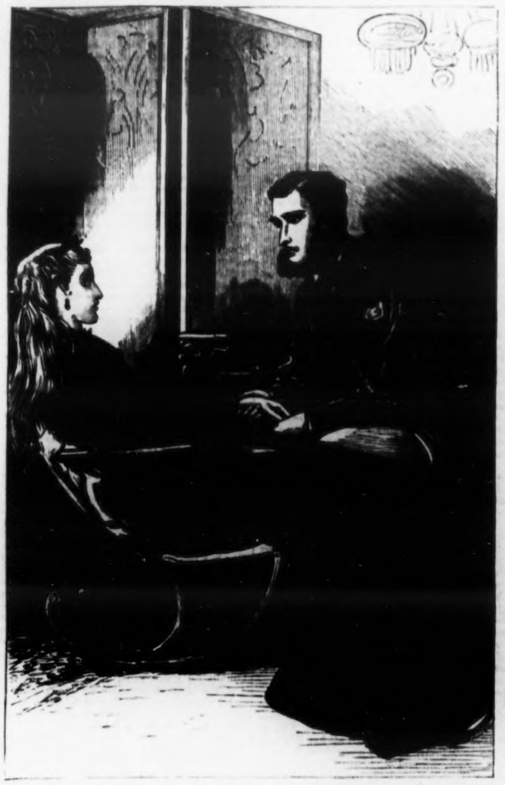
AT MRS. RICHARD DUNN'S.

Another year had come in, and was coursing onwards. The sweet May flowers were above ground, the May sunshine was making gay even London streets; those fine white houses in Paradise-square seemed ablaze with its light.

In one of the best of the said houses, the one owned by Richard Dunn, there sat, in what is called an American chair, a young girl in deep mourning, who was coughing sadly. Her face, surrounded by its golden hair, was painfully thin, her form shadowy. She was tired of sitting by the fire, and had dragged the chair to the window to sit in the sunshine. You would scarcely have known her for the Belle Annesley of six months before.

Mrs. Annesley had died in March. The home was broken up; and Belle, with her portion of three hundred a-year, had been staying since with her cousin, Mrs. Richard Dunn. Where her home would eventually be fixed was not decided; all concerned were content to leave it to the future. It was proposed that in the autumn Belle should go on a visit to her brother in the West Indies, and so avoid the cold of the next English winter, for her chest seemed delicate.

Her chest seemed delicate: it was said from one to another. The girl was wasting away to death before their eyes, and yet it was all they saw! "She coughed too much, and her chest was weak, and she grew thin grieving for her mother!" Oh, but they were all blind together.



"BELLE," SAID THOMAS KAGE IN A LOW TENDER TONE, "YOU ARE LETTING PAST TROUBLES LAY HOLD OF YOU."

The first to see any cause for apprehension was Mrs. Garston; what was there that the keen old eyes did not see? Belle—poor, sick, weary, hopeless, grieving child—had been strangely averse to going out for a long while. Before her mother died, the plea of remaining with her was an excuse; since her death, *that* had been the plea. But Mrs. Garston drove one morning to Richard Dunn's, gave them a sound trimming all round for yielding to Miss Belle's inertness, and carried the young lady off with her for the rest of the day; at least, until dusk approached. She sent her back in the carriage then, telling her to keep the windows shut; and when Thomas Kage came as usual in the evening, abruptly met him with the announcement that Belle Annesley was dying. Mr. Kage, seeing Belle often, for he generally went in to Richard Dunn's two or three evenings in the week, rather disputed this; and it aroused Mrs. Garston's ire. Contradiction always did. He had certainly thought Belle looking ill when he got home from circuit, but he attributed it to her mother's death, and perhaps somewhat to the mourning robes.

"How long is it since you saw her by daylight?" demanded Mrs. Garston.

Thomas Kage could not remember. Not, he thought, since last winter.

"If you are not entirely overdone with work to-morrow, you just quit it for an hour, Thomas Kage. To hear you talk of the amount of business on your shoulders, one would think you must be making your fortune as quick as it 'ud take an air-balloon to get from here to Jericho."

"I have to do a great deal of work for a very little pay," he answered laughingly. "It is only the great guns amid us who make fortunes."

"You 'don't see much change in her!' she has 'a bright color of an evening!' You are a fool, Thomas Kage!"

"But—"

"Now don't you begin a dispute. Anybody, *not* a fool, would know that invalids like Belle always do pick up in an evening. If you can spare a couple of hours of that precious time of yours, you go and see her to-morrow by daylight, and then tell me whether I'm right or wrong. Will you do this?"

"Yes, I will."

And accordingly on this very day, when Belle had just drawn her chair into the sunshine in Mrs. Dunn's handsome drawing-room, Thomas Kage came in. He talked of indifferent matters with as cool an air as if he were conscious of no secret motive for calling; chiefly to Mrs. Dunn and Mrs. Dunn's baby, a little damsel who sat on her mamma's knee, fiercely biting away at a coral and flinging her small fat arms about.

But he took the opportunity to glance between whiles at the rocking-chair opposite him, and at her who sat in it. Wan, white, shadowy; her blue eyes weary, her golden hair somewhat neglected; the thin hands lying inert on the black crape of the lap; so sat she. A pang of regret darted through Thomas Kage.

"How long has your cough been so troublesome, Belle?" he asked, as the baby grew restless, and Mrs. Dunn rose to carry it about. Not that it was a violent cough; but hacking and frequent.

"Oh, I don't know. I had it last spring. It went away when the hot weather came in."

"I shall feel your pulse, young lady; being a bit of a doctor."

He crossed over, and took her hand in his; a hot, damp, fragile hand, its palm very pink. Thomas Kage laid it down again, and put his gentle fingers on her forehead.

"I have had a doctor," said Belle. "Mr. and Mrs. Dunn called in Dr. Tyndal, in spite of my saying there was nothing the matter with me. There is nothing, Thomas, except the cough; and that will go away with the advent of warm weather."

"What did the doctor say to you?"

"Say! That nothing did ail me, that he could find out. He says it every time he comes."

"He really does," interposed Mrs. Dunn, jogging the baby in her arms as she spoke. "I tell him that Belle gets thinner; but he seems to think there is no cause for it. He says he has several young patients suffering from coughs; through the coldness of the spring, he thinks. Why, here's May, and we have had no warm weather yet. If the sun shines, it is only with a cold brightness."

"I should say he is a muff," remarked Thomas Kage. "The doctor I mean; not the sun."

Mrs. Dunn laughed, Belle laughed; and the laughing appeared to offend the baby, who set up a defiant cry. Upon which Mrs. Dunn left the room to consign her to ignominy and the nursery.

"Belle," said Thomas Kage in a low, tender tone, seating himself near her and bending forward, "you are letting past troubles lay hold of you."

The wan face became lovely with a crimson flush.

"No," she said evasively; "no."

"Nay, Belle, speak the truth, as to your own heart. *It is so.*"

There was just a little feeble battle with the instinctive effort to maintain the denial, and Belle gave it up for ever. For a moment she looked into the kind dark eyes, bent in true concern upon her, and then hid her face in her hands.

"And if it be so? Will you tell me how I am to help it?"

"But, my dear child—look up, Belle; this is serious. If you do not make head against it, it will make head against you."

"Do you see that I am looking very ill?" she asked.

"Yes, I do. It did not strike me until to-day."

"Do you think that I am dying?"

"Oh, Belle, you should not say foolish things."

"But I feel like it."

She was looking at him now earnestly, and he at her; her sad eyes wore a strangely peculiar light.

"There's nothing to live for. I have felt that since—you know; and now that mamma is gone, there is less and less. But it is not that, Thomas. Though life had everything to make me wish to stay in it, to strive to stay, I feel that it would be of no use. It is drifting away from me."

"It is wrong of you to think this."

"But if it be so, and if I cannot help feeling and knowing that it is, where's the wrong then?" she persisted.

"Are you conscious of any malady?"

"No, not of body. I lose strength, and I get thinner and thinner; that's all."

"Then why should you feel that you are dying?"

"I don't mean dying yet. Only that I shall never get up again and be as I once was—as other people are. Thomas, will you believe that I have come to long for death? Heaven only knows what I have gone through—what my pain has been."

"You told me a minute ago that you had no pain."

"Neither have I of body—except the cough."

He took her left hand very tenderly within his, and stroked it, as a mother might soothe a sick child. The right hand was raised, shading her face.

"The pain and anguish are killing me, Thomas. I cannot help it. Indeed, I did try to take your advice to throw things off, and to forget gradually; but I could not do it. I'm afraid I was not strong, and it has worn me out."

"You must make a true, earnest, *prayerful* effort, once for all, and rally."

"I have not prayed to rally. I have prayed for death—but only if God pleases. There is no sin in that. I believe He sees that I could not live on with my broken heart."

"Hearts don't break so easily, my dear girl. I once thought mine had snapped right asunder, but I fancy it is whole yet."

She shook her head sadly.

"It has been breaking ever since that time—breaking and breaking, night and day, night and day. I did not think any one could go through what I have, and live. I could not go through it again."

"I am afraid, Belle, this state of mind is sinful," he rejoined, really not knowing what to say that would make any impression on her.

"I hope not. The horrible pain is upon me always, Thomas, always. It is wearing out my heart; it is killing me; it prevents any desire to live. If the pain were lifted off me—and oh, how willingly I would lift it if I could!—then I should be happy again, and wish to live on; but I cannot lift it; it is not in my power; instead of leaving me, it seems only to grow more real. Don't you see? I and my will are, as it were, helpless."

"Yes, I see," he murmured, his tone partaking of the pain she spoke of.

"It is making me wish for death, Thomas. There can be no other relief. Oh, I know how good you are, and how good Lady Kage was; but don't blame me, please don't blame me!"

"Blame you!" he interjected feelingly.

"And sometimes I think that God is not blaming me; that He is sending all this in love. I was such a wicked girl, you know; doing what I could to plague my mother, to ridicule and annoy everybody. It was well that punishment should come to me—that I should see my sin. With heaven in view, Thomas, it seems like sin now."

"*Is* heaven in view?"

"I think it must be," she softly said. "I think God means me to see it, and to long for it. I have taken lately to dream of being in the sweetest place; where the sense of perfect rest is upon me, and pain and tears are over; the light is beautiful, softer and brighter than anything on earth, and the flowers are sweeter. It is heaven, nothing less. When I wake up, and my real pain rushes back on me, I stretch out my arms feebly to God, and ask Him to please to take me to it. I think He will."

Thomas Kage sat for an instant in silence. This was difficult to deal with.

"Listen to me, Belle. If you mean that you really and truly think that you are in danger of death, it must be seen to. We must call a consultation."

"A consultation! *It would be worse than useless.* What I am suffering from is nothing within the scope of a physician. I am just drifting out of life without any malady—except that of a broken heart."

"But—"

"Thomas, believe me," she earnestly pursued, "nothing can be done for me; there is no disease to work upon. If you called in all the doctors in London, they could say no more than that. Dr. Tyndal sees me every other day; he will preach to you by the hour about want of 'tone,' and spring's deceitful winds, and young ladies' fancies; and finally tell you there's nothing else the matter with me. Go and ask him. Many a girl has suffered, and wasted away to death as I am wasting, and the doctors have never known what she died of. It is not their skill that is in fault."

"Granted; but—"

"And mind, Thomas, you must not speak of this; you know that there's no one else in the wide world that I would breathe it to. I could not have told you but for what you disclosed to me that night. We—"

A servant came in, bringing the cards of visitors. Not seeing his mistress, he presented them to Miss Annesley.

"Yes, I suppose they must come up," she answered, wishing the house was her own, so that she could be denied.

As the man left the room again, she cast her eyes carelessly on the cards, and started up with a fant cry. Thomas Kage bent to look.

Captain Dawkes—Mrs. Dawkes.

Since the inauspicious marriage (if you knew all, my reader, you would indorse the word) of Mr. and Mrs. Dawkes the previous November, they had chiefly resided at the Rock. Mrs. Kage recovered in a degree from her attack of paralysis, but only to be more battered in look than ever, more dilapidated in constitution; and to pay her a visit daily Mrs. Dawkes found an intolerably wearisome task. How Captain Dawkes contrived to reassure his wife on the score of his accredited ill-doings, he best knew: woman is credulous, and man is wary. He did contrive to do it; and after the accusations in the vestry, Mrs. Dawkes heard no more. Those who would have spoken the truth to warn her from the man, found their lips sealed as soon as he had become her husband. If Mrs. Dawkes had cause for any suspicion, it was confined to her own breast. She had committed the great imprudence of marrying without having her available money settled on herself, and if Captain Dawkes made free with it, why the law would have said it was his own to do with as he pleased. They went in for a vast deal of show and expense; and the Captain was a gentleman at large again, to display his face in the London world at will, and get as much credit as he chose. He had repurchased into the army, and was altogether grand. Their London house, the lease of it bought recently, was one of the most fashionable mansions in Belgravia; and Captain and Mrs. Dawkes had now come up to take possession of it, with the intention of being a very fashionable couple. Caroline had always loved show and glitter; and it may be that she loved it all the better since her heart had grown a little seared with a certain blight Fate had cast upon it. But for the cold spring, and the rather delicate health of little Tom Canterbury, Mrs. Dawkes had been up before May. The Captain had been a good deal away from the Rock himself, pleading his soldier's duties. However, here they were now in London, and had come to make a call on Mrs. Richard Dunn.

The crimson flush of emotion burning in Belle Annesley's cheeks was already fading to an ashy whiteness. She had started up to quit the room, but the sound of voices and steps close outside the door cut off her escape. Thomas Kage laid his restraining hand upon her in calm composure, and it almost seemed to give her strength.

"Be still, Annabel. You have nothing to do but keep quiet. I will shield you."

And as if to receive the visitors, Mr. Kage placed himself before her. Mrs. Dunn unconsciously helped matters by coming in at the moment. There was greeting and much talking; and it was only when they separated to place themselves in chairs that the invalid girl in her deep mourning was perceived.

"Ah, Miss Annesley?—how are you?" said the Captain, putting out his hand as coolly as though he had never played fast and loose with her.

Caroline took a step forward in curiosity when she heard the name. She had never seen Belle Annesley, but she could not forget that it had been said she was Barnaby Dawkes's love. Barnaby, when asked about it by his wife in private, had burst out laughing at the very idea; had made game over it, game also of Belle. But Mrs. Dawkes was curious, nevertheless; and she came across the room to see.

Belle had risen. A fragile girl with a mass of golden hair, and a transparent face whose delicate cheeks were shining with a hectic glow. But if Caroline had been calling up incipient ideas of jealousy, they went out at once as she stood; for there was something about the girl that seemed to say she was not very long for this world, and Caroline's heart filled itself with a wondrous pity.

"Sarah, is this your cousin?" she asked, calling Mrs. Dunn by the old familiar Christian name.

"Yes. Miss Annesley, Mrs. Dawkes."

The two had stood looking at each other, apparently waiting for the introduction, or Mrs. Dunn had surely never been so formal as to make it. She felt a little confused herself, remembering what Barnaby Dawkes's conduct had been.

Belle sat down again, her bosom heaving and fluttering; the leaf-like hectic fading out of the cheeks. Thomas Kage moved near her; the Captain crossed over and took a chair by Mrs. Dunn.

"I cannot think how it is we never met during the six months that I passed in London, when my boy was a baby," began Caroline, who seemed as if she could not take her eyes off the sick girl. "I feel quite sure I never saw you. We called twice on Sarah—who was then staying with your mamma—but I do not remember you at all."

Belle cast her thoughts back to the time spoken of by Mrs. Dawkes, in a kind of transient shame. Too well she remembered that spring: it was in the very height of her thoughtless and flirting days, when she had no care for aught save her admirers. The advent of Barnaby Dawkes and his love had not dawned then.

"I must have happened to be out when you came," she replied. "I know I once went with mamma and Sarah to call on you in Belgrave-square, but you and Mr. Canterbury were not at home. I was very young then, and mamma did not take me out much. But I saw you once, Mrs. Dawkes."

"Ah, you mean in the old, old days when we were little mites of children, and you came down to Chilling Rectory on a visit. That was just after mamma settled at the place. Of course we saw each other then."

"No. I meant when you were in town. You had been calling upon Mrs. Garston, and Mr. Canterbury was putting you into the carriage. I stood inside the gate and watched you away; but you did not notice me," added Belle, losing herself in the reminiscence.

"You don't seem well," said Caroline, a little abruptly. And the remark seemed to scare Belle's senses away.

Thomas Kage came to the rescue, speaking quietly.

"I was just telling Miss Annesley that her cough was making her look ill and thin; but she says she had it last year, and only got strong when the warm weather came in. It has been a late spring."

"It has not been much of a spring at all, down with us," observed Caroline, playing with her watch-chain, and never looking at him as she spoke. Face to face with Thomas Kage, it could not be but that remembrance should be upon *her*. "Little Tom has had a cough, too; they think his chest is weak."

"Have you brought him to town?" asked Mr. Kage.

"What a question, Thomas!" she answered, with a laugh that seemed not to be very real. "As if I should go anywhere without my boy! You'll come and see him, will you not?"

"Certainly."

"Mamma says I had a delicate chest myself when I was a child; she was always afraid for me. Papa died of consumption. But I grew up to be strong and well, and I don't see why Tom should not."

"The boy has always seemed to me to be a particular healthy child," observed Mr. Kage. "Though small and slightly formed, he is quite sound."

"Of course he is," acquiesced Caroline. "Captain Dawkes says sometimes that Tom is *not* strong—but I am sure it is all fancy."

"Shall you make a long stay in town?"

"Until August, I suppose. I want to spend September on the Rhine. By the way, can you tell me whether Mrs. Dunn is in London?—Lydia Canterbury, you know."

"She is."

"The Miss Canterburys are abroad still. Austin Rufort and his wife came back to the Rectory just as we left Chilling. I did not see them; we crossed each other on the road."

"The Miss Canterburys are in London, staying with their sister, Mrs. Dunn," spoke Thomas Kage. "I seem to know more about your family than you do, Mrs. Dawkes," he added, with a slight laugh.

Mrs. Dawkes bit her pretty lip. She did not like his calling her "Mrs. Dawkes," or the coolly civil indifference that characterized his tone and manner, as if she could never be an object of the smallest interest to him henceforth for ever. Neither did she care to hear that the Miss Canterburys were in London. A sense of the wrong inflicted on her late husband's daughters lay dormant in a remote corner of her heart; the sight of them invariably woke it up, and Caroline would rather have been spared the meeting.

"Oh, staying with Lydia Dunn, are they? Do they look well?"

"I have not seen them, Mrs. Dawkes."

"Mrs. Dawkes" again! Mrs. Dawkes drew her chair round, and joined in the conversation with her husband and Mrs. Richard Dunn.

But Captain and Mrs. Dawkes soon rose. Perhaps neither felt quite at ease in the present company. In the movement—the slight bustle of the farewells—Captain Dawkes got an unobserved moment behind with Belle. Clasping her fragile hand within his so warm with strong life, he bent his face until it nearly touched hers, speaking in sweet and tender whisper:

"Do not blame me until you know how I was tried. The misery has been worse to me than to you. Heaven bless you, Belle!"

And then Thomas Kage came back across the room to say his own adieu after they had disappeared, he wondered what had come to Belle Annesley. Her blue eyes were shining as with the light of love; the dead weariness had momentarily left her face; and her cheeks were bright with a soft rose color.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ The road ambitious travels is too narrow for friendship, too crooked for love, too rugged for honesty, too dark for science.

☞ A German astronomer says that we are soon to have another moon, and that it will be nearer to the earth than our present satellite.

THE USE OF A CHILD.

A SCHOOLMASTER'S TALK.

I have very high ideas of what a child really is; or perhaps it would be more correct to say, I have somewhat different notions about children from those held by most people. I see in them great gifts from God, which we ought to be thankful for, and which we should hope and believe will bring us blessings.

Indeed, I make a great account of children; and, since it has pleased the good Giver to take mine to himself again, I find an infinite delight in watching over and caring for other people's. As in so doing I have acquired no little knowledge of children, it may be that I am competent to take up and controvert the declaration thrown out by one of my neighbors, "That there wasn't a man in the world who could give half a dozen reasons for a child's being any use, except to pull weeds or to scare away the crows."

I must confess that when I heard Farmer Jakes say this, it made me feel very sad at first, and I hung down my head for a moment, while thoughts of little ones passed away came fast and thick into my memory. Soon, however, my usual cheerfulness returned, and I at once undertook to give my neighbor a few reasons for the use of a child.

Omitting interruptions and digressions, such as a talk of this kind is wont to be lengthened out by, the substance of what I said was nearly as follows:

First of all, I commenced, a child helps to make us unselfish. Selfishness—the love of self and the living for self—is the root of most of life's miseries; and anything that helps to get rid of that must be of use.

I once knew a couple who started in life determined to think and to do for themselves alone. They knew no better; and they found before they had been long married that all was not as comfortable as they expected it to be. The truth was, they each thought only of self; neither thought of giving up to the other; they sought their happiness only in self-enjoyment; and they soon began to rub against each other, and to wear off some of the varnish and gilding of the wedding-day. And they might have lived on all their lives in this style, had it not been that they were cured of their selfishness by a child. When I say "by a child," I mean by God's use of a child. He meant children to teach us; and He made that child teach them. Mary Fletcher was an only daughter; and she had all her life long been accustomed to have everything her own way; and she had no idea of giving up to anybody or *for* anybody until her baby was born. When the baby came it brought its love with it; and there was scarcely an hour in the day but Mary found she must think *for* another, and *about* another, and give herself *up to* and *for* another; and a new life seemed to open before her. 'Twasn't all playing with the baby; 'twas, as I said, caring and thinking for and giving herself up to it; and that not once or twice, but all day long; and sometimes all night long too. People who knew her character might have wondered at this, but that babe had a charm for Mary; and though it couldn't beckon with its little hand, and couldn't whisper any soft, sweet words of counsel, still it led her away from self; and its feeble little cry was always talking to her and saying, "There's one leaning on you, one looking to you; no mother belongs to herself, but to her child." At first, Mary Fletcher did this without thinking much about it; but all people have their thinking times, and mothers as well as others. Ay, mothers have thoughts peculiarly their own; God meant them to have; and this one used to think as she sat at work with the child across her lap or in the cradle at her foot. One day I dropped in, and I saw the young mother ripping some work off some of her own things—they were some of her wedding-clothes, too, that she had been proud of not so very long before. She was near the end, and had only about three or four inches to rip off; so I thought, "I'll just wait and see what she's going to do with it; I'm certain she's going to put it on something for the child;" and sure enough she was. It was scarcely off her own dress before it was sewn on to the child's.

"Mary," said I, looking into the cradle and giving the child a kiss for I knew I might say anything after I had kissed the child—"Mary," said I, "this child's a giant."

"Never," said the mother; "'tis a fine child; but Tom's family and mine are all small; 'twould be very strange if we had a giant amongst us."

"I don't mean in size," said I, "but in strength."

"Why, he can't stand or do anything for himself," said she.

"No; but he can do something for you," said I; "he's just now been knocking you down."

"Why, the child's asleep."

"Ay, ay, and you're awake; and it's all the more wonderful that he should knock you down while you are awake."

"I think you're crazed, Mr. Martin," said she.

"Not a bit of it," said I. "You know, Mary, you used to be vain and make a great deal of being smart; and now I see you're stripping yourself for another."

"But then 'tis for my child, Mr. Martin."

"Exactly so; and that's just one of the uses of a child—to make us give up for another; and if only we follow out the lesson the child teaches us, we shall say to ourselves, 'If 'tis pleasant to give up for this child, 'twill be pleasant to do so for others also.' This babe makes you find your happiness in giving to another; and when it grows a little older and is able to enjoy happiness in its childish way—in toys, and a little play, and a few sweeties, and some little stories, and so forth—don't you feel as though you'd be very happy when you are making it happy?"

"Yes; I'm looking forward to that time," said the young wife; "I don't feel I shall want anything for myself if I can get everything for the child."

"But you used to be all for 'self,' Mary."

"Oh, that was before the baby was born, but I feel quite different now."

Well, I say, another use of a child is that *it unbends our minds.* Just as the sun when it rises drives away the fogs and mists, so a child when it comes into a house drives away no end of fancies. There are no end of fancies in the world; and many of them very troublesome and very foolish, too. And if you observe, you'll find that these fancies abound most where there are no children. Whenever folk turn in upon themselves, or have no one but themselves to think about, there the fancies are almost sure to come. There was a farmer who used to live near me, and he and his wife had no end of fancies. He couldn't sit in any chair but the one; and she couldn't sit in any place but the one; and he couldn't eat any dinner unless he had it on the table exactly as the clock struck two; and she couldn't drink any tea unless the teapot came in exactly as the clock struck five; and he couldn't write with any pen but the one; and she couldn't cut with any pair of scissors but the one. And so they went on; he had one kind of ache and she had another; he took one kind of pills and she took another; and he took what was good for the gout and she took what was good for the rheumatics; and that was their style. They were wrong inside, and wrong outside, and wrong every side; until, one Michaelmas, a beautiful little boy and girl arrived at the farm-house! and all the neighborhood remembered that Michaelmas as the one when Farmer Throwle's twins were born. Ah, it was wonderful how those two children changed matters at the farm-house. Perhaps there are some people who have so many fancies that nothing less than twins will cure them; that's only a speculation of mine; so it was, however, that these twins did cure the fanciful farmer and his wife. Even in one year everything was changed in the old farm-house. The farmer was seen sitting on the floor with a child crawling up each leg; and his wife was sitting here, and there, and everywhere, and very glad at times to get a chance of sitting down at all. As to dinner, the babies were sometimes fractious exactly at two o'clock—yes, two to the minute by the kitchen clock: and John was so fond of them he wished them to be attended to first. And, as if that wasn't aggravating enough, they would sometimes both tumble down on their noses and begin to cry precisely as the teapot was being put on the table. And so, good Farmer Throwle and his wife soon learned that it was possible to eat dinner at five minutes past two, and to drink tea at three, or four, or even ten minutes past five. The boy made off with his father's pen and the girl with her mother's scissors; and the father found out that he had a whole bundle of pens on his shelf, every one of them capital good ones, and that he could write with them very well; and the mother tried a pair of scissors she had lying for ten years in her work-box, and declared they cut twice as well as the old ones. And as their minds were now diverted from themselves, they bought no more pills, and the rheumatics and the gout went—nobody knows where; only, depend upon it, it was to some place where there were no twins; and the farm-house became quite a different place.

Then *children are a great refreshment.* They are amongst people what flowers are in nature—what music is amongst sounds—a great delight and refreshment—

Especially in the small hours of the morning—about half-past three or twenty minutes to four, when they're very refreshing. Ask Mrs. Chig what she thinks of them then; or, for the matter of that, you need not go so far; here is Mr. Chig—Neighbor Chig makes a polite bow—he'll tell you all about it; they're beautiful about twenty minutes to four in the morning, especially if there's a white frost and you're obliged to get up and walk the room with them.

Ever since the Fall, Mr. Chig, the good and bad are mingled together in this world; as the saying is, "You can't find a rose without a thorn," and I'm not the man to deny that everything has its inconveniences as well as its pleasures. Farmer Jakes, there, cannot grow wheat and get a good stack in his farm-yard without being troubled with smut, and no end of troubles; but he don't object to put a good price on his grain, for all that. And our friend Mr. Chig, here, cannot shave people without blunting his razor; and he has the trouble not only of stropping, but even of setting his razors at times; but he doesn't object to any one's chin on that account, or to the profit he makes by shaving it; even so, you cannot rear and have the enjoyment of children without some trouble.

Even if they grew, there would be trouble, just as there is now. The trees on which they grew must be pruned, and dug about, and manured, and have plenty of pains taken with them; and then, after all, Mr. Chig, perhaps just as they were coming into blossom, the white frost might destroy them.

A child refreshes us by changing the current of our thoughts. We all need change; and our Maker intended us to have it; and if people don't get it, some wear out, and some get mad, and some die. If men keep always thinking of the one thing, they often get stupid, and often cross over it; and their lives have none of that variety which it was intended they should have. When I was young I lived for a while as secretary to a celebrated judge. I used to write a good deal for him and attend to his library; and for a couple of hours every day I taught his two little boys. They had an only sister, a dark-haired, black-eyed girl of about five years of age, who was allowed to come in for a lesson now and then. Well, when the judge came home the first thing he generally did was to come to our school-room; and the more heavy the cases he had on hand, the more surely did he come to us. Then he forgot juries, and counsels, and pleadings, and precedents, and all the wranglings of the day; and at the end of half an hour he looked a different man. Who that saw that grand and venerable wig at four o'clock would have thought that a black-haired child would be mounted in its place by five? Ah! we all said it was the children who kept the judge strong and well; and many a time he said to me when we were writing far on into the night, "Ah, Martin, if it were not for the children who freshen me up every morning at breakfast and every afternoon when I come home, I think I couldn't get through the work I do now."

One day I went to him to the court with some papers, and he gave me a ride home in the carriage. As we got near home, I saw him start and look as though something had struck him that gave him distress; and I said, "I hope your lordship isn't ill." "No, no, Martin," he said; "but I have forgotten something I promised little Clara, and I must go back for it. We must be true with children as well as with grown people." So back we went; and the judge ordered the carriage to stop at a bazaar near the court. I did not know what he bought until we reached home; and then I found that he had taken all this trouble about a doll for little Clara and a bag of marbles for the two boys. We took three parcels that day out of the carriage—one, the doll; another, the marbles; and a third, a bag containing letters and documents which involved property to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds. Well, the judge made almost as much of the doll as his little daughter did; and he laughed as heartily over a game of marbles as either of the boys; and he left the school-room with half a dozen in his pocket—his winnings in the game. 'Twas going on for one o'clock the next morning when the judge folded up the last of the letters he had been reading; and he said to me as he tied a string round the bundle, "Martin, I'm more than paid for going back for that doll and those marbles. I forgot this cause so completely while I was at play with the children that I came back to it with a clear head and fresh spirit; and I see my way through it all now."

They keep our feelings fresh. The heart often grows old before the body; and the heart's growing old has often a good deal to say to the body's growing old before its time. I've seen men old at thirty, and men young at sixty. Children bring a man back to his early days; they make a man to be a boy and a woman to be a girl once again. I saw our doctor the other day playing cricket with his little boy, six years old; he had five stones set one atop of another for wickets, and his crooked walking-stick for a bat; and the young chap was working all his might to bowl him out. The doctor's whole heart was in the game, and he laughed fit to split his sides; and all this while there was a grand cricket match worth seeing going on in the next field. Why wasn't the doctor there—for he had been a great cricketer when he was young? Because youth is our fresh time, and what brings us back to youth brings us back to the old fresh thoughts and feelings; and this was just the way the doctor used to play with his brother when they were children—long, long before he thought of giving anybody physic, and when he took precious little of it himself. The child was *drawing away the doctor's mind from his cares*—and, poor man! he had plenty of them at the time—and *stirring up his spirits.* Depend upon it, his blood coursed more quickly through his veins after that game of cricket than it did before.

I shall now proceed to another branch of the subject. *Children give us healthy springs and motives for work.* A child makes the parents feel that *they are looked forward to as providers*—of course, under God—for He is the great provider for all. It makes a *man feel himself to be somebody* when he gathers the children round him and looks at them, and says to himself, "They're all looking to their mother and me; I'll buckle to like a man, and they sha'n't want if I can get."

Is it not something to feel one's self valued and loved; to feel, "Well, however little I may be made of in the world, I know a place where I'm put at a high figure." No man should be ticketed up a bargain in his own house; bargains don't pay anywhere, least of all at home. There was a Mrs. White, a neighbor of mine in former times, and she used often to say, "I like my husband always to come to a rising market—the price of him is always going up. I'm always raising it; and I'm teaching the children to raise it; and the good man's feeling himself more precious to us all every day. 'Tis a fine thing, and better than any drink in the world to cheer a man up, to have the testimony of one's conscience as to having done one's duty; and when Joseph sees the children all decent and dressed in his earnings, and fat upon them, depend upon it he's happy; if he weren't happy he wouldn't call me 'mother' in the way he does."

"But," says Mr. Jakes—"hold on a moment; the young ones will grow up, and then they'll care no more for their parents than a calf does for a cow."

I was coming to that point. Who is that old lady living with you, Mr. Jakes? I think I heard the saddler saying he was stuffing a cushion for your spring cart, to take her to church on Sundays.

"Oh! my old mother you mean; and a good old creature she is. She was a good mother to me. I only wish I had my father along with her."

Exactly so—exactly so; you were their calf, Mr. Jakes; and I'm saved any further dwelling upon this point, for you're as good an instance as I desire of the use of a child after it's grown up. Many a parent owes all her comfort and happiness in after-life to the care and provision of her children; and it is God's will that children should help their poor, helpless parents. If children don't put themselves to the uses God intended them for, then that's their fault, but the use remains the same, for all that.

And even a dead child has its uses. There is nothing lost in this great creation. There are in God's providences uses for the dead as well as for the living. We may not see them, or we may mistake them, but they no less truly exist. Dead children have their own deep use for us. We have seen that there is a blessing in having a nursery in the house; is there to be no blessing in having a nursery in the heart?

When the little body is taken out of the nursery of the house—the bright life gone, the warm flesh cold, the laugh all stilled—then it is taken into the nursery of the heart, to be bright and warm there as long as that heart beats—to laugh and sing in secret sunny chambers where death cannot reach it—where it can live on just as it used to do in nursery days of old. There are nurseries in which there is no nurse; and happy is that parent who, when a child is taken, furnishes a nursery instead of setting apart a graveyard in her heart.

There are some, perhaps, who will look on this as sentiment, and nothing more; but I, for one, know that it has its living use. I have a nursery in my own heart; and there are six little ones there, and I find their use to me. As the world would say, "I have no child now;" but I myself say that I have six—six here, far in here—in my heart.

And this is why I go from time to time to the neighboring town, and bring home a sick child with me to nurse until it is well again. Those children cannot recover without change of air and scene, and without good nursing. The hospital can do something for them, but not all; and I enjoy finishing what it begins. The little ones would not let me rest, even if I were inclined so to do. They are ever talking to me, and saying, "Father, be kind to all little children, for His sake who is always kind to us; and for our sakes too." Sometimes they say, "who *was* kind?" and then I remember the many blessings they had when they were alive; and sometimes they say, "who *is* kind?" and then I see them all so bright and joyous, and think how well they are taken care of; and how can I but bless others, for His sake who blessed and blesses mine? We have many happy days in our house which no one knows anything of. When the sick ones come, I talk to the little ones within, and they seem to say, "Father, let them have our bed and our playthings." And when they go away, they seem to say, "Father, give them flowers to take back to the crowded town; and give them a kiss—for we children love kisses;" and I do all that the little ones within ask; and a great deal more too. Isn't a dead child of use when it can thus make a man a blessing to others?

I never think of one who has died young otherwise than as a child. As far as this world goes, the rest of the family grow up—they go out into the world—but the one that has gone, you have never known but as a child. It never is tossed about on the waves of this troublesome world; it has never gone forth; it tarries always with you; and, what is more, I think that as a child only can it be known for ever.

I have no doubt that in all things in Heaven there will be variety there, even as there is here on earth; it is the one God that has made Heaven and earth. There will be variety, no doubt, in the employments of Heaven throughout eternity; and variety of countenances and voices, and perhaps characters too; and I believe that the little children will be there. At any rate, I expect to find mine there, and to have them with me for ever and ever. That land is bright—oh, how bright! in every thought of it; and one of the bright thoughts is that He who loved the little children, and took them up in His arms and blessed them, and said that "of such is the kingdom of Heaven," will have them with Him for ever. When the great wonders of redemption are unfolded, their bright eyes will look at them with wonder; and when the praises of redemption are chanted, their sweet voices will sing of them with their own soft music. There will be buds as well as blossoms in the garden of the Lord!

I have said a little of the use of a child in daily life; permit me to add a word of its use as a TEACHER OF DIVINE THINGS.

Trust—Faith, for they are the same thing—is one of the most important of graces; and see how it is taught us by a child. I took a little one to London the other day, and really I couldn't but learn much from the little girl myself. We went by the train early in the morning; and when we arrived we got into an omnibus full of all sorts of people. As I sat opposite the child, I couldn't but think, "Well, here's a fine lesson for me. Here's this child that was never in a train before; 'tis true, she shrunk back a little when she heard it coming thundering and hissing along; but it was only to catch hold of my coat; and the moment I got in she got in too. And now, here she is, quite satisfied to sit still amongst all these strangers, although there are a couple of fierce-looking men at each side of her—just because she knows she is with me, and I won't leave her. Surely," said I, "she's my teacher, and says to me, 'Isn't God your Father—and why don't you trust Him as truly as I am trusting you?'" Well, we got out of the omnibus, and I said, "Come, Jenny, keep firm hold of my hand; run when you feel me run, and stop when I stop—no matter whether 'tis in the middle of the street or not." So she seized me tightly by the hand; and now, I had to dodge a cab; now, to follow on after a cart; now, to jump over a puddle; and at last we were landed in a safe corner at the very place to which we were bound. "Jenny," said I to the child, "weren't you frightened when that great wagon overtopped you?" "No," said she, "for I had hold of your hand." "Nor when the cab came rattling past almost at a gallop?" "No," said she again, "for I had hold of your hand." "Well, weren't you tired when you had to follow that cart so long?" "Oh, no, for I had hold of your hand." And my heart smote me, for I said to myself, "Oh that I were trustful as a little child—allowing my Father to take me in and out by the hand, and doing just as He tells me—going and stopping as He points out!"

Well, by-and-by I took the child into a cake-shop, and I gave her a few sandwiches, and afterwards a cake or two; and as we were sitting there, while she was eating them, I said to her, "Jenny, where did you think you'd get your dinner to-day?" for we didn't take anything with us when we left home. "Oh," said she, "I knew you had money, and that we should meet with some shops; and I was sure you wouldn't let me starve." "Oh, Jenny," thought I, "if you had on a preacher's gown and were up in a pulpit, you couldn't teach me more than you are doing to-day. What," said I, "shall this child trust me, that am not even her father; and shall I not trust my Father for my daily needs?" What should I have thought of Jenny, if she refused to leave home this morning until I had put it down on a paper that I'd give her her dinner before she returned, or if she were to be making a bargain about every bit she was to have? Dear child! she left it all to me; she trusted me, and she's all the better off, for I'm treating her like a queen in this confectioner's.

There was no need of any specific thought or argument about it; it was all understood between us, though never a word was said. "And," said I to myself, "shall I be always eaten up with careful thought and perplexed with argument about my daily needs, and act worse by my Heavenly Father than this child does by me?"

I don't know but that underlying it all there might have been a kind of feeling of right to be cared for on that child's part. Children, I believe, have that kind of feeling, owing just to their being children and the father's being a father. It is a right founded on natural reason; and what's founded on nature needs no explanation; and as I stood in the place of a parent to that child, so it had the feeling of a child toward me. Well, God has been pleased to call Himself "our Father;" and the child raised this thought in my mind, "Haven't I a right to expect Him to act as a Father by me?" And I felt I had; and I'm sure God likes us to feel that we have that right, and to use it too. He likes us to have confidence in Him; and 'twas a child that first taught me that. I've made use of the thought ever since and very happy it has made me too.

Is not freedom from care a blessing? Half the world is being devoured by care—it may be with the care to get enough; or, if they have enough, with the care of how to keep it or to get more; but care is destroying souls and bodies every day. Well! it was my dear little ones who taught me before they left the world *to live free from care.* Fathers generally leave something to their children, but it was my children who left something to me.

I saw that they lived by the day; that with them "sufficient unto the day was the evil thereof;" and I saw that they slept at night; and I said to myself, "They are now as God has made them, and not as they would be if the world had spoiled them; I, too, will be a child and sleep." And I do sleep, my friends. Sleep and faith often go together. The children taught me to trust and to sleep too.

Another lesson they taught me was *contentment with little things.* I watched them, and I saw that small things pleased them; and, moreover, that simple and unartificial things gave them enjoyment; yes, that they took more or less pleasure in everything. We grown people do not get out of little things the good that God has put into them; the children do. There is beauty in every little flower, if only we knew how to admire it.

In yonder chest, which I call my bookcase, are some old oyster-shells polished up, some dried ferns and flowers, some bits of curiously-twisted sticks, and odds and ends of various kinds. They were my little ones' toys; they are my books. I look at them, *and learn to find my happiness in what is within my reach*, as they did theirs.

The way, too, that the children had to learn from day to day the obedience they had to render me, even the correction they had to receive, all spoke to me; and *I learned from them to be a learner myself*, to give up my will to a higher will, and to bear whatever chastisement my great Father, from time to time, imposed on me for my good.

But I shall say no more, though the use of a child is a subject I could talk on for ever.—*British Workman.*

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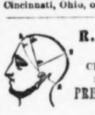

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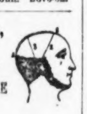

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WIT AND HUMOR.

LINES TO A WHATAFOOL.

Whither, 'midst hurrying crowds,
While glow the city lamps like blinking moons,
Dost thou rush on where stale tobacco clouds
Curl thick in gay saloons?

Vainly thy father's eye
Might mark thy nightly course to plead and warn,
As thou dost hasten, whiskey flushed and dry,
To take thy frequent horn.

Seek'st thou the rummy brink
Of bloated appetite, that ocean wide,
Wherein so many that have learned to drink
Have sunk from sight and died?

Thou thinkest it is smart
To wear a jewelled watch and nobby vest,
And push the cue—the while a patient heart
For thee is sore distressed.

All day thy thoughts have turned
While selling silks or footing gains and dues,
How thou would'st spend at night what thou hast earned,
In wine and oyster stews.

In billiard rooms thou'lt reach
Thy gambling fellow goslins where they flew,
And smoke and drink and play till mid-night—each
As big a goose as you.

And soon thy race shall end;
Soon shall a defalcation be disclosed!
For thither all such nice young fellows tend;
'Tis not as you supposed.

You think that "you can stop?"
Oh yes! "at any time!" "you will not fall"—
"You'll stop, and never drink another drink."
Just try it—that is all. —*Not by Bryant.*

Anecdote of Admiral Farragut.

The following anecdote of Admiral Farragut, we believe, says the New Haven Journal, has not appeared in print. While at New Orleans, the officers of the Susquehanna, probably desirous of going North, represented the ship as greatly in need of repairs. A board of survey was appointed to examine and report on her condition. In due time the report was handed to the Admiral. After reading it over carefully, he remarked: "I find nothing but generalities in this report; it does not appear that anything is broken in the machinery, or that anything is specially wrong about her."

Then followed a dialogue between the Admiral and Engineer:

Admiral.—"What is the matter with the vessel?"

Engineer.—"General debility."

Admiral.—"That's very definite; what do you mean by general debility?"

Engineer.—"I mean that she is very weak in many of her parts, and not safe."

Admiral.—Still quite indefinite; now, tell me, is there anything wrong in her movements?"

Engineer.—Yes, sir; she cannot be reversed; *i. e.*, she cannot be managed in backing her, sir."

Admiral.—"Is that the only thing wrong in her movements?"

Engineer.—"Yes, sir; I believe so."

Admiral.—"Then she will answer my purpose; I do not want a vessel in my fleet to move backward."

He then tore the report into pieces. Nothing more was heard of the "debility" of the Susquehanna.

A Generous Husband.

Perhaps fifteen or seventeen years ago, in a very good state, I saw a woman with a pleasant Quaker face, under a simple Quaker bonnet—I rather liked it—and her Quaker husband sitting by her with his broad-brimmed hat on. They had spent many years together, you could see by their faces. He was just bidding her good-bye as the train was starting, and I heard her ask him for a little money. I did not at all wish to hear what they said, but I heard that he had bought her a ticket, and saw that he had taken her satchel politely on his arm. She hated to ask him for money; a good many other women have hated to ask for it, too. She began to say, "I wish I had a little"—she did not want to finish, thinking that he would think of it and give it to her; but he did not. So out it came all at once: "Maybe I'll want a little money while I'm gone." The good, honest Quaker turned his face toward her with surprise, and said:—"What hast thou done with the quarter I gave thee last week?"

Primitive Medical Practice.

A gentleman in Alabama, in exerting himself one day felt a sudden pain, and fearing his internal machinery had been thrown out of gear, sent for a negro on his plantation, who made some pretensions to medical skill, to prescribe for him. The negro, having investigated the cause, prepared and administered a dose to his patient with the utmost confidence of a speedy cure. No relief being experienced, however, the gentleman sent for a physician, who, on arriving, inquired of the negro what medicine he had given his master. Bob promptly responded, "Rosin and alum, sir."

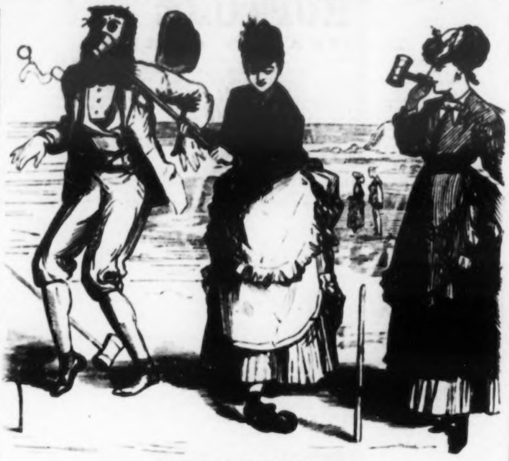
"What did you give them for?" continued the doctor.

"Why," replied Bob, "the alum to draw the parts togedder, and de rosin to sodder um."

The patient eventually recovered.

THE QUAKER AND HIS NEIGHBOR.—A Quaker had a quarrelsome neighbor, whose cow, being suffered to go at large, often broke into the Quaker's well-cultivated garden. One morning, having driven the cow from his premises to her owner's house, he said to him, "Friend T——, I have driven thy cow home once more, and if I find her in my garden again—" "Suppose you do," his neighbor angrily exclaimed, "what will you do?" "Why," said the Quaker, "I will drive her to thee again, friend T——." The cow never troubled him more.

☞ The qualifications which make the really great statesman do not appeal to the crowd half so strongly as a little "smartness," loud talk, and unlimited impudence.



CROQUET ON THE SANDS.

MAUD.—"Now then, Julia, hit the stick."—(And she did too!)

PLAYING KITTEN.

Have you seen a kitten play with a ball?
She clutches it tight in her sharp little claws,
Tosses it up, and then lets it fall;
Rolls it away, and after a pause,
Brings it again to her side; with a spring,
Bounds far from it with motion active,
Yet ne'er for an instant, loses the thing—
Oh! a kitten playing is very attractive.

Just so a maiden plays with my heart—
A moment she holds it meshed in her smiles,
Then seems to forget me and turns apart;
And when I am almost freed from her wiles,
Calls me back with a glance so sweet
That only her in the world I see,
And again lie captive before her feet,
Though I know she is playing kitten with me. —*Harvard Advocate.*

Lost in a Snow-Drift.

We think the following story "too good to keep;" and, as we promise not to betray the hero's name and place of residence, we hope he will forgive us for telling how he got lost in a snow storm:—

It was a pleasant place—the home of the Doctor—just in the edge of the woods. The house was one of those neat little cottages where one always expects to find comfort, peace and happiness.

It was almost hidden among the trees, with which the ground had been so lavishly adorned. Some were so large that you would think they must be centuries old.

The Doctor and his wife lived here alone, with the exception of a boy whom the Doctor had taken to do chores for him, and to be company for his wife when he was attending his patients; for although, as I said, he was getting old, the people of the little village near could not have been persuaded to give up their faithful physician.

One day it had been snowing—such a snow storm as you Western people seldom see. The beautiful white flakes seemed to vie with each other to see which should reach its destination soonest, and the sky above seemed one endless sheet of snow. "Well," said the Doctor to his wife, as he returned from his round of calls, "I am glad there are not many sick just now, for I think home is the best place for an old man like me;" and he shook the snow from his great coat and handed it to Bruce to hang up, saying that he should not need it any more that night.

Just as he had seated himself at the tea-table and his wife was pouring out his tea, a loud rap was heard at the door.

"It is some belated traveller," decided the Doctor as he arose to open the door.

"I want you to go and see my wife, Doctor," said the visitor as he seated himself by the fire.

"What! go ten miles such a night as this? It is impossible," retorted the Doctor.

"I fear she will die," said the man, "unless you do. I have a man here with me, and we have shovels; we will see you safe through, if you will go."

The amount of it was, the Doctor went.

It is not my purpose to dwell on his ride there; for it was made comparatively easy by the aid of strong arms and shovels; nor of the sick woman, but of his journey home. The snow was still whirling thick and fast as the Doctor tucked himself snugly in his light cutter for the homeward trip, and started off briskly; for Nellie was anxious to get home to her warm stable.

The Doctor was not very well acquainted with the roundabout way he came, and with the darkness and blinding snow he soon became bewildered. So after a while, thinking he had ridden farther than the distance to his own home, he thought he would trust his horse to get him out of the difficulty, and gave Nellie full liberty to choose her own road; so, after he had gone on for some time longer, Nellie stopped and whinnied. The Doctor unmuffled a little, and peered around in the darkness and snow.

"Why, Nellie, where are we?" he said. "This looks very like Chestnut Ridge; yes, there's the opening in the trees, at the turn of the road on the brow of the hill—this must be Chestnut Ridge—eight miles from home. Well, Nellie, we may as well camp for the night, for we can't get home."

"How lucky that Bruce supplied us well with blankets," soliloquized the Doctor, as he unhitched Nellie from the cutter, and fastened one of the blankets on her, and turned her loose to look out for herself. Then spreading a buffalo robe on the snow and turning the cutter up, he wrapped himself in his blankets and crawled into his novel bed, and was soon sound asleep.

His faithful dog was very uneasy all night at his master's absence, and bounded out at the first opportunity to look for him. Finding the cutter in such a novel condition, he began to bark furiously around it.

You can judge of the Doctor's astonishment, when he came out of his bed-room, to find himself in his own yard, and Nellie standing at the stable door, wondering, no doubt, why she was treated so coolly.—*Western Rural.*

Death a Blessing.

The following fine passage is from "The Primeval World of Hebrew Tradition," a new volume by Rev. F. H. Hedge, D.D., lately published by Roberts Brothers, of Boston:

If, then, we fairly envisage the idea of a life of nine hundred years, if we picture to ourselves the intolerable burden of such a life, we can hardly believe the men of the antediluvian world were cursed with that load. And the more we ponder this idea the more clearly shall we see the falsity of the old theological view that represents death—the death of the body—as a curse which man drew down upon himself by his disobedience. Not a curse, but a blessing, without which life itself would be a curse. Of all the angels that wait around the Throne and do the bidding of eternal Love, there is none whose ministry is more indispensable than that of the angel of death. Whatever sorrows may attend the timing, the method, and incidents of that ministration, the end is sure and supreme blessing.

In the order of nature, every day of earthly existence is rounded with a sleep by which the soul dies into new and replenished life. If that sleep, which is temporary death, be long withheld, insanity ensues. The mind cannot bear the strain of a too protracted waking. And by the same order the great day of mortality must have its crowning sleep of proportionate duration. If that crowning sleep were too long deferred, the interminable day would be a burden and a curse.

And why, it may be asked, if death is a necessity for this world's use, why not also for the use of the next? If earthly life must be shortened to meet the requirements of finite nature, how, hereafter, shall finite nature bear the burden of immortality? I suppose that hereafter, also, there may be the need from time to time, of "a sleep and a forgetting," as the ages accumulate their experience on the soul. Immortality may be a series of births instead of one continuous living. Successive deaths may be the risers of those "altar-stairs that slope through darkness up to God;" each stair a new day of spiritual life, a higher capacity of serviceable action, a nearer revelation of the infinite Love.

But all this is hidden behind the earth, among the mysteries of the unknown land whose day cannot dawn until earth's declines. We only know that the "undiscovered country" must be reached, if at all, through the night of death. And will we not welcome, when it comes, the silent guide to the "silent land?"

"O Land! O Land!
For all the broken-hearted!
The mildest herald by our fate allotted
Beckons, and with inverted torch doth stand
To lead us with a gentle hand
Into the land of the great departed,
Into the silent land!"

Orange Blossoms.

The custom of wearing orange blossoms in the hair by a bride upon her wedding-day, is, in France, a matter of much pride and importance, inasmuch as it is a testimonial of purity, not only of the bride herself, but of integrity and morality in the character of her relatives. In the province of Franche Comte this adornment is considered a sacred right, obtained by undoubted character, and as such proudly maintained. Should any act of imprudence in early life, implying even a suspicion of taint upon the chastity of the maiden, be known, the use of the orange blossom is forbidden; indeed, should the female attempt to wear it on the occasion of her marriage, she would be encountered at the church door by the village lads, violently seized, and the emblem of purity degradingly torn from her hair; nor would the ceremony be suffered to proceed until all trace of the flower thus profaned had disappeared from her person.

In almost every village or small town in France the bride entitled to wear the crown of orange blossoms has this beautiful certificate of her purity either framed or placed under a glass shade; and it is religiously preserved, if possible, even through generations, as an indisputable testimonial of undoubted character. The mother of a natural child never dares assume, not only the orange blossom crown, but even the white dress and veil, upon her wedding day, these habiliments being considered to belong only to the pure. Should such an attempt be made, the most bitter ridicule, the most unmerciful sarcasms, would accompany her and her unfortunate husband to the altar.

☞ An absconding wife is thus pathetically appealed to in a "Personal" column: "Jane, your absence will ruin all. Think of your children, your parents, your husband. Return, return; all may yet be well. At any rate, enclose the key of the cupboard where the gin is."

Useful Things.

About two o'clock on a December night, in Illinois, when the thermometer stood in the neighborhood of zero, a party of wags hailed a farm-house in a very boisterous manner. The farmer sprang out of his bed, drew on a few articles of clothing, and ran out to see what was wanted, when the following interesting dialogue occurred:—"Have you any hay, Mr. ——?" "Plenty of it, sir." "Have you plenty of corn?" "Yes." "Any oats?" "Yes." "Any eggs?" "Yes." "Any butter?" "Yes." "Plenty of meats and breadstuffs?" "Yes." "Well we are glad to hear it, for they are useful things in a family." The party then drove off, leaving the farmer to his reflections.

AGRICULTURAL.

English Farm Horses.

As Americans are aware, the English farm horse is called the "cart-horse," being totally different from the trotting affinities used on this continent. These cart-horses are treated in about the same comparative way in respect to the nags as the laborer lives in comparison to the more independent class. The cart horse is made to eat up all the chaff blown from the grain when winnowed, and as every farm in England grows more than three times the quantity of grain ever produced on American farms, this chaff is the main support, for it is sifted through sieves for the purpose, the coarse portion given instead of hay, and the short, fine portion fed with very small quantities of grain (oats and split beans) in baits given by the "carter," whose duties consist of making his teams look fat and sleek on the greatest quantity of rough food mixed with the least grain possible. The horses, from eating so much chaff, drop in their carcass and are always very deep and round, the geldings having the appearance of mares in foal when viewed from a little distance, and the great objection by the carter to going out of a walk with English farm teams is that it destroys this round, barrel look, while the farmer dislikes to see them trot, especially on the road, because their great weight shakes their feet and legs and brings on side bones, puffs, &c. Four horses go to a wagon in a general way, about three tons besides the wagon being a load on fair roads, a small boy accompanying the carter. No rains are used except when ploughing "G. O.," for the carter walks by the side of the horses, and in meeting on the roads the teams turn out for each other on the opposite side to the one customary here, that the carters should not be between the horses or vehicles.

The cost of keeping cart horses in England is not much more than half what it is to keep the nags; "but will they do as much work?" says the American farmer. They (the English) plough somewhat deeper than the Americans, and though the teams are not out so many hours, they keep pulling away all the time they are out, very seldom sweating, as their immense bodies draw along whatever is behind them with little effort; in fact it is not much for one of these animals to walk away with what would make two of the undersized ones here scratch a good deal to start with.—*Country Gentleman.*

Large Chests in Horses.

Horses that are round or "barrel chested" are invariably more muscular and enduring than those of the opposite kind. Scientific sportsmen are, in a great measure, guided in their opinion of a horse's racing qualifications by his girth just behind his shoulders. By this test a well known jockey told the reputation and prowess of the celebrated racer "Plenipotentiary," almost from the period of his birth. Cattle dealers and butchers, in like manner, judge by the chests and shoulders of cows and pigs what amount of fat they are likely to gain in the process of feeding. All animals that have large lungs are remarkable for the vigor of their appetite, and for the facility with which they appropriate their nutriment. Such animals will feed upon the coarsest hay and straw, while their less fortunately constructed companions are fattened by no kind of food. An amusing anecdote is told of a simpleton, who, in trying to sell his horse, declared that "the animal's eating was a mere nothing." The intelligence would, contrary to intention, have sufficed to ruin the prospects of sale, but that the buyer, with a rare discrimination, inferred from the horse's chest that the capacity of his appetite had been unwittingly misstated. He bought him on the hazard of an opinion, and had no reason to repent his judgment.—*Ruralist.*

Mixed Husbandry.

The farmer who devotes all of his land to two or three leading crops, will certainly make money when the seasons are propitious, and the demand is active for the products. But it often happens that one or more of these conditions are lacking, and then the labor and means expended during the year are measurably lost—or, negatively stated, the profit is not sufficient to compensate for the outlay. By the system of mixed husbandry the farmer may not, it is true, be able to derive immense profit from single crops, but it seldom happens that all of the crops will fail, and the profits accruing from the different sales will well repay him—especially when it is considered that, if he has additional labor, he is saved from the weight of care and anxiety that oppress those whose hopes are all dependent on the success of their wheat or corn, or other single crops. But every one must judge which system is best adapted to his means, and the circumstances surrounding him.

RECEIPTS.

VENISON STEAKS, FRIED.—Wash two steaks, season with salt, black and red pepper mixed, and fry a light brown on both sides. When done, place them on a dish, and dredge into the pan one dessert spoonful of browned flour, to which add gradually one cupful of boiling water; stir well, and season to taste. Garnish the top of each with currant jelly, and send to table on a well-heated dish.

VENISON PASTY.—Cut a neck or breast into small steaks, rub them over with a seasoning of sweet herbs, grated nutmeg, pepper and salt; fry them slightly in butter; line the sides and edges of a dish with puff paste, lay in the steaks, and add half a pint of rich gravy made with the trimmings of the venison; add a glass of port wine, and the juice of half a lemon, or a teaspoonful of vinegar, cover the dish with puff paste, and bake it nearly two hours. Some more gravy may be poured into the pie before serving it.

THE RIDDLER.

Enigma.

I am composed of 58 letters.
My 6, 56, 34, 50, 24, is the name of a poet.
My 9, 54, 21, 13, 57, is the name of a general.
My 14, 10, 2, 11, 25, 9, 30, is the name of a city.
My 44, 8, 15, 53, is the name of a lake.
My 18, 28, 41, 46, 16, 3, 49, is the name of a city.
My 23, 58, 29, 35, 38, 39, 34, 44, is the name of a river.
My 1, 55, 45, 53, is the title of a European sovereign.
My 4, 30, 37, 44, 51, 55, is the name of a city.
My 19, 30, 34, 55, 22, 28, 55, is the name of a city.
My 5, 12, 17, 6, 35, 51, is the name of a mythical sailor.
My 7, 33, 31, 8, 40, is forbidden.
My 20, 27, 23, 26, 49, 43, 18, is the name of a state.
My 9, 32, 47, is a kind of a liquor.
My 36, 54, 30, 27, is a kind of a metal.
My 48, 18, 43, 51, is a part of the human body.
My 52, 44, 27, 21, is a village in Western Ohio.
My 30, 10, 42, 55, is the name of a state.
My whole is the name of a great thoroughfare. D. S. BATES.
Piqua, Ohio.

Charade.

Complete, I'm a noble vessel.
Beheaded, I'm one more rude.
Beheaded again,
I'm part of the same,
By the sailors understood.

Probability Problem.

A heavy uniform rod is thrown at random on a round table whose radius is equal to the length of the rod. Required—the probability that the rod is wholly *on* the table; the probability that *one* end is over the edge of the table, and the probability that *both* ends are over the edge of the table.

ARTEMAS MARTIN.
McKean, Erie Co., Pa.

☞ An answer is requested.

Problem.

In a right angled triangle all the sides are of integral lengths. The length of the hypothenuse is a number consisting of nine places of figures, and the two other sides differ in length by unity. Required—the sides of the triangle. J. SCOTT.

☞ An answer is requested.

Problem.

Required—the diameter of an auger that, passing through the centre of a sphere, 20 inches in diameter, shall cut away two-thirds of the volume of the sphere.

ELI FLINT.

☞ An answer is requested.

Conundrums.

☞ Which is the oldest woman's club? Ans.—The broom-stick.

☞ Why may young ladies, when they blush and weep, be said to be disturbers of the public peace? Ans.—Because, when they blush and weep, they raise a *hue and cry.*

☞ What is the latest thing in dresses? Ans.—Night-dresses.

☞ What do cats have which no other animal has? Ans.—Kittens.

☞ What is a sure preventive to hair turning gray? Ans.—Make up your mind to *dye.*

Answers to Last.

ENIGMA—Weather. CHARADE—Shellbark.

MINCE PIES.—Take 1½ pints of chopped, boiled meat, 2½ pints of chopped apples, 1½ pints of sugar, ¾ of a pint of vinegar, ½ pint of the broth in which the meat was boiled. A large ½ pint of raw beef suet finely chopped, ½ pint of brandy, with half a pound of raisins, seeded and cut in half, 5 tablespoonfuls of ground cinnamon, and ¾ of a tablespoonful of ground cloves. Mix all well together, and put into the crust and bake. It is well to only put in half the brandy when you mix it, then put one or two tablespoonfuls in each pie just before it is baked. This quantity will make six pies.

SPICED BEEF.—Chop fine the tough ends of two very large beefsteaks, and a piece of raw suet about as large as half an egg, season with pepper and salt, and a little dried summer savory; then add 2 well beaten eggs, with about a half pint of dry bread rolled fine, or as much rolled crackers; 4 or 5 tablespoonfuls of sweet cream, and a piece of fresh butter as large as an egg, make into a long roll with flour enough to keep it together, put it into a baking pan with dripping as large as half an egg, and water enough to keep from burning. Bake as you would a roasting piece of beef; when cold, slice thin for the table. Some eat it with vinegar.

STEAMED BROWN BREAD.—Take two quarts of sweet skim milk, one table spoonful of saleratus, one of salt, half a cup of molasses; put in equal quantities of rye and Indian meal until the dough is as stiff as can be conveniently stirred with a spoon, then put it in two two-quart tins. Place sticks across the bottom of the kettle to keep the water from the bread; place one of the tins on these, and the other in a tin steamer, placed on the top of the same kettle, and let it steam three hours. Care should be taken to keep the water boiling while the bread is cooking. When done, put it in a warm oven long enough to dry the top of it, not bake it. Yeast can be used instead of saleratus, if any prefer it, but the bread must rise well before putting it in the kettle.

ALMOND PUDDING.—Half a pound of blanched almonds, four ounces of white sugar, six tablespoonfuls of rosewater, half a pint of sweet cream, three eggs, a little grated lemon-peel. Put the almonds in a mortar and put a few spoonfuls of sugar on them, and rub them fine, then add the rosewater, beat the remaining sugar, and the eggs together separate, and then add them to the mixture in the mortar—when all are well-mixed, warm a little, then put a little crust around the edges or sides, and bake half an hour.

CORN BATTER CAKES.—One quart milk; three eggs; salt, and as much sifted corn meal as will make a thin batter; beat well together, with one tablespoonful wheat flour; bake in cast-iron pans, and serve hot.